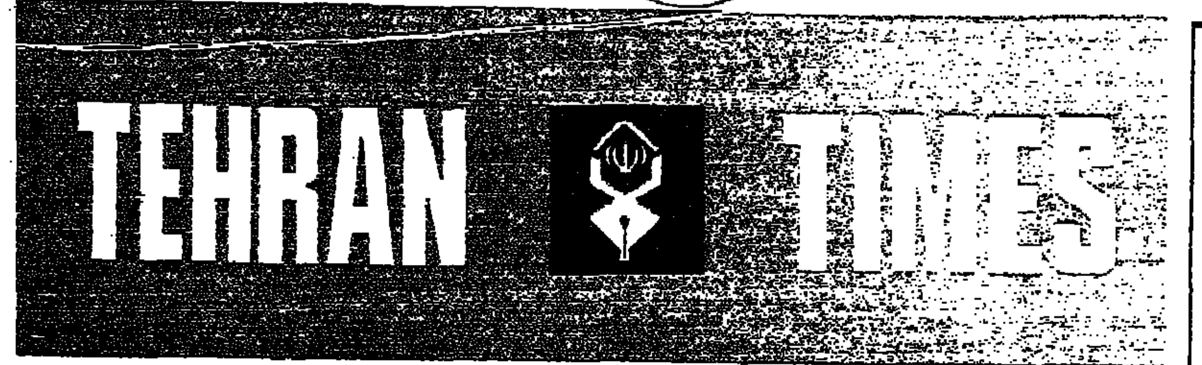
Islamic Human Rights Commission Calls For Religious Tolerance in Turkey

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The secretary of the Islamic Human Rights Commission appealed to the UN Human Rights Commission to make Turkey observe religious tolerance and freedom of expression.

In a letter to the UN Human Rights Commission, he said that over the recent months there has been reports of inhumane and violent treatment of the people by the Turkish military.

(Contd on Pg. 14)



16 PAGES, PRICE 200 RIALS

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Erbakan: Turkish-Israeli Maneuvers Cancelled

ANKARA — Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan announced Tuesday that controversial planned naval maneuvers by Turkey, Israel and the United States were "postponed to the upcoming years," according to the Anatolia news agency.

Erbakan made the announcement at a meeting with Iraq's visiting Justice Minister Shebeb Lazim al-Maliki, the agency said.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

ECO Summit Opens in Turkmenistan

By Our Correspondent

ASHKHABAD — A two-day summit of the Organization for Economic Cooperation opened here Tuesday under the shadow of conflict in one member nation, Afghanistan.

Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani here on Tuesday called on the member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) utilize the enormous energy reserves of the region and expand cooperation among themselves.

Speaking at the extraordinary summit of the ECO, the president urged the member states to carry out the eight plans of action and agreements already approved in Islamabad.

He said the ECO should adopt a strategy for economic cooperation in accordance with the priorities already given in those plans of action.

He said, "taking into account the special location of the region, the priorities are focused on three sectors of trade, transport and telecommunications, and energy for at least the next ten years so that special attention should be given to promote the three areas of cooperation."

On promotion of trade, the president said the obstacles hampering boosting of trade should be lifted, tariff reforms should take effect, and an arbitration body should be formed to settle trade disputes.

The heads of state or government of Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and the host country Turkmenistan, and Burhanudin Rabbani took part in discussions in the Turkmen Parliament building.

Pakistan sent Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif instead of President Farooq Leghari.

The nations are due to end the summit Wednesday with an "Ashkhabad declaration" agreeing on "the development of regional transport and communications infrastructure and a network of oil and gas pipelines in the ECO region," according to a document issued by the Turkmen government.

"Economics and commerce will dominate the meetings at the summit but Afghanistan will occupy the hearts," one European diplomat here said.

The ECO, which was created in 1985, is the successor body to the Organization for Regional Cooperation for Development, founded in 1977 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey.

Mubarak Calls For Arab Unity

CAIRO, Egypt — President Hosni Mubarak on Tuesday urged Arab legislators from 18 countries to close ranks and oppose Israeli plans to build housing for Jews on disputed territory.

"Our Arab homeland is being challenged by the Israeli policies and practices which violate the spirit of peace," Mubarak said in a statement sent Tuesday to the two-day conference of the Inter-Arab Parliamentary Union. Fathi Srour, the speaker of Egypt's Parliament, read the statement to the conference.

Mubarak urged deputies to united in opposition to the "wrongful policy of settlement building and land confiscation."

Some 100 Arab legislators are in Cairo for the meeting, which will focus on improving political and economic ties between Arab states.

Relations between Arab countries and Israel have been tense since the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in March began building new housing for Jews in predominantly Arab East Bait-ul-Moqaddas.

Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdel Meguid accused Israel of destroying the peace process.

The Israeli moves require "us to enhance our solidarity and be determined to achieve our goals," Abdel Meguid told the meeting.

The union is not a policy-making body but its decisions are influential in Arab countries.

(AP)

LEADER:

People's Massive Turn Out in Election to Guarantee Security of System

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei here Tuesday said that massive turn out of the nation in the upcoming election will guarantee the security of the Islamic system.

Addressing the officials in charge of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), the Leader underscored the IRIB's responsibility for enhancing people's awareness.

The Leader thanking the IRIB's policy regarding the presidential election and lauded the IRIB's programs for encouraging people to participate in the election either during the Fifth Majlis election or the seventh presidential elections to be held on May 23.

He also lauded the IRIB for its programs on the 22nd Bahman rallies, marking the 18th anniversary of the culmination of the Islamic Revolution as well as the International Qods day rallies.



The Leader underlined the need for making people familiar with the characteristics of the most qualified candidate for the crucial post of president. He added that the IRIB should provide people with the criteria for electing the best candidate without referring to a specific candidate.

Alluding to the characteristics of the present candidates, the Leader said that no one knew the present candidates better than him and that he knew them either during the anti-Shah's struggles or after the culmination of the Islamic Revolution. However it is important to vote for the most qualified candidate, the Leader stressed.

He further urged the IRIB officials to encourage people to participate in the election. Although the number of votes for the next president is very important, I attach more importance to massive participation of people in the polling. He added that a clear-cut majority of the eligible voters should go to the polls because the number of voters will guarantee the security of the Islamic system against the ceaseless hostility of the enemies.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said that he was confident majority of people will go to the polls.

Ayatollah Khamenei further thanked the IRIB personnel for their sincere efforts in producing TV programs and said that their practices points up their commitment to the Islamic values.

The quality and quantity of the programs produced by the IRIB are significant, he said.

The Leader also underlined the need for further improvement of the entertaining programs and said that there is no satire in the IRIB's programs.

Prior to the Leader's speech, the IRIB's head, Ali Larijani reported on the activities of the IRIB in spreading Islamic teachings and identity and disseminating the Islamic values.

Pakistani PM Leaves After Successful Talks

MALE — Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif Tuesday left for a Central Asian leaders summit after landmark talks here with Indian Premier Inder Kumar Gujral, officials said.

The first Indo-Pakistan summit in eight years, held Monday on the fringes of the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) forum, made some progress on Kashmir which has caused deadlock in all previous negotiations, they said.

Gujral and Sharif in their 90-minute meeting agreed on the reciprocal release of some 500 civilian prisoners arrested while trying to cross their mutual border illegally, Indian and Pakistani foreign secretaries said.

The two countries also agreed to set up joint working groups to evolve a "comprehensive mechanism" to address all outstanding

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Anti-Taleban Forces Form New Government

ISLAMABAD — Opponents of Afghanistan's Taleban militia have formed a new government under President Burhanudin Rabbani, opposition sources in Islamabad said on Tuesday.

They said Rabbani had named a new government after meeting Uzbek leader General Abdul Rashid Dostam, a representative of the Hazara militia chief Karim Khalili, and other opposition figures in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif on Thursday.

Rabbani's former military commander, Ahmad Shah Masood, an old rival of Dostam, did not attend the meeting.

The Defense Ministry was allocated to Dostam and the Finance Ministry to Khalili, thought it was not immediately clear if they would serve personally in those posts.

The sources did not have a full list of posts in the new government, but said the three ethnic groups opposed to the Taleban — Uzbeks, Tajiks and Hazaras — were all represented.

Taleban forces are locked in combat with opposition forces led by Masood, Dostam and Khalili on frontlines north of Kabul and in the northwestern Province of Badghis.

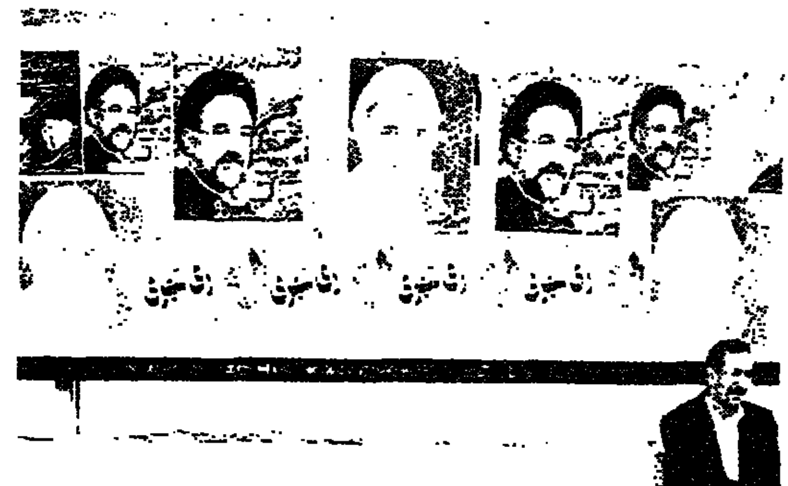
The three opposition leaders formed a loose military pact after the fall of Kabul, but diplomats say tensions between them continue to hamper their battle against the Taleban.

(Reuter)

Firooz Kooh, With a Long History Behind, Awaits New Horizons Ahead

SEE PAGES 8 & 9

Assessing People's Political Participation in the Coming Presidential Election



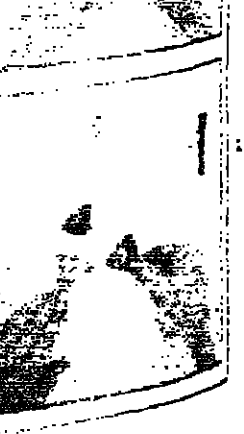
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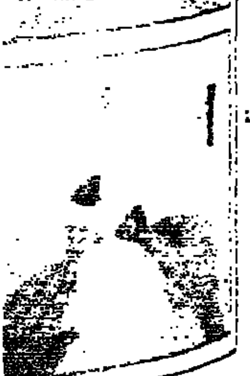
Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Islamic Republic of Iran is approaching its seventh presidential election. The formal campaign period has started and there are four presidential hopefuls to run. Arguments and exchanges of views are gradually being heard from people as to who they consider fit to occupy the post of president. The debates are likely to become more heated as the election date gets nearer, indicative of the sensitivity of the event and the issues, on the one hand, and public awareness toward the grave responsibilities of the post of president in the country on the other.

As pointed out by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, in remarks touching on the event, not all peo-

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In the Name of God

Take alms out of their property, you would cleanse them and purify them thereby, and pray for them; surely your prayer is a relief to them; and Allah is Hearing, Knowing.

(HOLY QORAN) (9:103)

OPINION

People, Officials, and Candidates During Election Campaigns

Iranians are going to the polls to elect their next president in less than two weeks.

Three factors play crucial roles in holding fair elections: Government officials, especially the Ministry of the Interior; the candidates; and supporters of candidates.

In charge of holding the elections, the Ministry of the Interior shoulders great responsibility for holding fair elections. The neutrality and firmness of the Interior Ministry are the most crucial factors in this process. We need the neutrality in order to provide a congenial ground for a healthy campaign. We need firmness in order to guarantee the rule of law and punish offenders with an iron fist. We need firmness in order to prevent vote rigging. In sum, the neutrality and firmness of the Ministry of the Interior will guarantee fair elections.

For their part, the candidates play a decisive role in holding fair elections. The candidates themselves—all of them—know full well that they have not elaborated on the details of their future plans. Voters, therefore, are not properly acquainted with the future plans of the would-be president. During the few days left to the elections the candidates must inform the people of their future plans.

If the candidates embark on informing the people of their ideals, ideas and plans, the Iranian nation will choose the most qualified candidate in the seventh presidential election. But if candidates resort to character assassination in order to undermine their rivals, such an approach will put the fairness of the election into question.

The role of supporters of the candidates is the most important one. All candidates should be able to use public forums equally in the election campaign. Unfortunately, a couple of weeks ago, certain circles disturbed the gathering of supporters of Seyed Mohammad Khatami in Mashhad. Such incidents should not happen again. If they happen, it is the duty of the law enforcement system to take the culprits to book.

Supporters of each candidate must bear in mind that tolerance is the best policy during the election campaign, else we will have chaos and disorder.

Another Quake Strikes Qaen

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Second quake measuring 4.8 degrees on the open-ended Richter scale hit Qaen in the northeastern Province of Khorasan at 20:58 hours local time (16:28 GMT) Monday, IRNA reported.

The Geophysics Institute of Tehran University registered the epicenter of the quake 850 km southeast of the base, at the vicinity of Qaen.

A powerful earthquake with a magnitude of 7.1 degrees rocked eastern Iran Saturday noon, killing and injuring thousands of people and making thousands more homeless.

128 villages have either been partially damaged or totally destroyed and 15,500 homes have been demolished.

Since Saturday noon some 195 aftershocks have hit Qaen and Birjand with a magnitude ranging from 3 to 5.5 degrees on the Richter scale.

Zargar Criticizes Contradictory Reports on Quake Casualties

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Head of the Natural Disasters Headquarters of the Interior Ministry Rasoul Zargar in Qaen, Khorasan Province, Tuesday criticized the contradictory and unrealistic reports by certain media on number of casualties of the killer quake which hit eastern Iran on Saturday.

Speaking to IRNA, he said that release of unofficial figures will entail unfavorable consequences.

Zargar added that the headquarters could not be held responsible for the figures printed in the newspapers or aired by the Central News Bureau.

He said that figures on the death toll were released officially on three occasion and the latest figure puts the death toll at 1,560 and the injured at 2,810.

In their interviews with reporters, various local officials in the past three days have given different figures on the casualties caused by the quake.



Zargar added that 10,500 tents, 25,000 blankets and large amount of foodstuff and clothings have been so far distributed among the survivors of the quake.

The total amount of damage inflicted upon the region will be released next week, he said.

More Messages of Condolence on Quake

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Messages of condolence continue to pour in following the magnitude 7.1 earthquake which hit eastern Iran on Saturday.

The Kazakh President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, in a message to President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on Monday expressed his deep sorrow over the massive loss of life and destruction caused by the powerful earthquake.

The disastrous quake has brought pain to the heart of Kazakh people, the message added.

Nazarbayev also condoled the Iranian government and the nation particularly the bereaved families of those killed by the quake.

A large number of foreign heads of states have condoled the government and the people of Iran on the occasion. On Monday, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ezzat Rostamov told Iran's Ambassador to Baku Ali Reza Bigdeli that the government of Azerbaijan would send assistance to Iran on board a cargo plane.

Foreign heads of states have cabled their condolences to Iran's President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

On Monday, the government of Georgia issued a communique expressing sorrow over the killer quake in Iran.

The Spanish king on Monday sent a message of condolence to President Rafsanjani, declaring also the readiness of his government to offer any help to Iran.

The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan Hassan Hassanov on Monday condoled with his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati for the natural catastrophe in Iran following a similar message to Iran's president from Azerbaijan's President Gaidar Aliyev Sunday.

Other foreign dignitaries who sent their condolences to Iranian officials Monday were Pakistan's President Farooq Leghari and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who condoled President Rafsanjani in separate messages Monday.

Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Mierlo, on behalf of the European Union, has sent a message of condolences to his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati on the killer.

This was announced in a press release issued by the Dutch Embassy in Tehran Tuesday.

"On behalf of the European Union, I would like to convey to you and the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran the heartfelt condolences on the earthquake near Qaen in northeastern provinces which claimed so many victims, less than three months after the earthquake in Ardabil," he said in his message to Velayati.

Mierlo is currently the president of the Council of Ministers of the European Union.

The President of Greece's Parliament Apostolos Kaklamanis on Tuesday sent a message to his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri expressing the Greek Parliament's "deep grief" over the loss of lives and injuries caused by the earthquake.

Int'l Assistance to Quake-Hit Areas Unprecedented

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Geneva-based International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said that the response to its emergency appeal for funds and material assistance for Iran's earthquake disaster has been unprecedented, an IRNA report said.

"The pledges have been coming in thick and fast," said Margareta Wahlstrom, under-secretary for the appeal response. "We are struggling to remember when there has been such a rapid and generous reaction over a 24-hour period to an appeal for a natural disaster."

Since launching the preliminary appeal for 12 million Swiss francs ($8.4 million), the federation reported raising 7m Swiss francs in the first 24-hours.

Wahlstrom said that the money was being used to provide vital relief supplies and stressed that another 5m Swiss francs was still badly needed.

The Iranian Red Crescent, she said, had been working around the clock, deploying 4,300 rescue workers within hours of Saturday's earthquake and distributing all emergency foodstock and relief items, but "its warehouses are now empty."

The magnitude of the disaster was growing and the number of people needing help was expected to rise, the federation announced, adding that an "immense task lies ahead."

In launching its appeal Monday, the British Red Cross said it was asking the public to help the thousands of traumatized survivors, who are having to come to terms with the mental anguish of what has happened and will be in need of acute assistance for four months.

Its director general, Mike Whitlam, said, "Many have lost everything and are having to endure the added hardship of freezing night-time temperatures."

According to another IRNA report, the UAE Vice President and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid al-Maktoum has ordered immediate dispatch of a planeload of relief aid for Iranian quake victims.

The UAE President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan an-Nahyan had already ordered dispatch of foodstuff, medicine and tents for the survivors of the killer quake aboard an airplane on Monday.

New Zealand is to contribute 75,000 NZ dollars to help victims of the most recent devastating earthquake in Iran, Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Simon Upton announced on Tuesday.

The UN Information Center in Tehran said here on Tuesday that the United Nations system in the Islamic Republic of Iran has donated $810,000 for the relief of the victims of the devastating earthquake in the southern Khorasan.

The Australian government on Monday sent $155,000 in aid.

The Syrian government on Monday sent 80 tons of relief supplies on board two planes.

Syrian Health Minister Iyad ash-Shatti told IRNA correspon-

(Contd on Pg. 14)

IRCS Clinic in Bosnia Marks Opening Anniversary

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iran's Red Crescent Society clinic in the city of Bihac, in western Bosnia, held ceremonies on Monday to mark its first opening anniversary, an IRNA report said.

Iran's Ambassador to Bosnia, Mohammad Ebrahim Taherian, who was present at the ceremony, said that the Islamic Republic of Iran has always come to the help of the Bosnian nation during their most difficult period. The establishment of Bihac clinic is an indication to Iran's affinity towards the Bosnian nation, he added.

The representative of Iran's Red Crescent Society in Bosnia, Mohammad Mahdkhani, also said that the Bihac clinic was built at a time when the liberated region was facing acute shortage of medical facilities.

The clinic was successful in rendering health and hygiene services to a great number of people in the region during the previous year.

At the end of the ceremony, personnel of Iranian clinics in Sarajevo and Bihac offered their services to the quake-stricken people in eastern Iran.

Hungary After Promotion of Ties With Iran

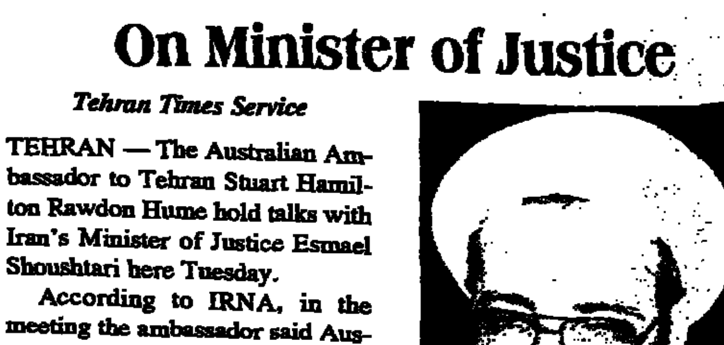
Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — In a meeting with Iranian Ambassador to Budapest Abdol Reza Rajabi on Monday, the Hungarian Deputy Foreign Minister Kadar announced his country's willingness to upgrade ties with Iran.

According to IRNA, in the meeting Kadar said that holding of cultural and trade fairs can promote understanding between the people of the two countries and help expand bilateral relations.

An Iranian cultural and trade fair was inaugurated in Budapest recently at the joint initiative of the Iranian Embassy in Budapest and Cultural Center of Iran in Vienna and was well received by the people, officials and businessmen.

It may be mentioned that Hungary is a member of the Council of Europe and is also among the countries expected to join the European Union in the future.



Australian Ambassador Calls On Minister of Justice

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Australian Ambassador to Tehran Stuart Hamilton Rawdon Hume hold talks with Iran's Minister of Justice Esmael Shoushtari here Tuesday.

According to IRNA, in the meeting the ambassador said Australia attaches high significance to it's relations with Iran.

He said that human rights, an internationally accepted principle, is used as a political tool by Western governments to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.

The Australian ambassador called for expansion of legal and judical relations between the two countries.

The Iranian minister in reply said that the ideals and beliefs of every nation should be respected and kept away from assault of other governments.



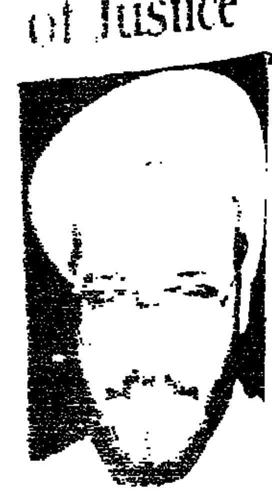
SHOUSHTARI

International conventions should always pay attention to the religious beliefs of other nations in their legal attitudes towards those countries.

ADB President Says
Boost Role of Priva

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Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Libya, Indonesia, Join Donors to Quake Victims

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — A Jordanian plane loaded with disaster relief supplies Jordan Tuesday for Iran where 1,560 people were killed in an earthquake over the weekend, officials said.

The plane was transporting 17 tonnes of tents, blankets, medicine and medical supplies, as well as a jordanian delegation, Religious Affairs Minister Abdel Salam Abbadi said.

Jordan's King Hussein offered his condolences Saturday night to Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani for the victims of the quake which struck eastern Iran earlier in the day.

The 7.1-degree quake also left 2,810 people injured and another 60,000 homeless. State television put the death toll at 4,000 Monday but Iranian officials said Tuesday that 1,560 people had died

Libyan Foreign Minister Omar El-Muntasser met the Iranian ambassador to Tripoli Monday night and told him that Libya will "grant emergency aid of up to a million dollars to ease the suffering of Muslim brothers in Iran," the Libyan News Agency Jana said.

But Muntasser complained that the international air embargo against his country was preventing the quick dispatch of Libyan aid to Iran.

The Indonesian government will send relief assistance to earthquake victims in Iran, state secretary Murdiono said Tuesday.

He appealed to Muslim nations including Saudi Arabia, the affluent one will share the responsibility of rehabilitation of uprooted families of Ummah.

Mirwaiz Moulavi Ummar Farooq who is also heading separatist conglomerate All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) as its chairman will make a formal appeal to people of Kashmir as head preacher on Friday for extending help to the quake victims of eastern Iran by contributing to the relief fund of Iranian government through Iranian embassy in New Delhi, individually or collectively.

He told IRNA that despite the fact that Kashmiri people were in distress "we will not lag behind in doing whatever we can".

He has expressed his condolences to the bereaved families and solidarity with the Iranian government on the calamity through the embassy on behalf of his party and people, the chairman said.

Iranian, Azeri Presidents Meet on Sidelines of ECO Summit



ASHKHABAD — Azeri President Geidar Aliyev in a meeting with President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani of Iran here Tuesday expressed condolences over the loss of lives caused by a powerful earthquake in northeastern Iran.

The president of Azerbaijan Republic said that his country is ready to send humanitarian assistance to Iran.

He briefed Rafsanjani on Azeri-Armenian dispute over Karabakh enclave and on the measures so far adopted for settlement of the issue at regional and international levels.

He said that his country was keen on expanding cooperation and relations with Iran and upgrading mutual transactions especially in the areas of oil and gas.

President Rafsanjani for his part expressed regret over escalation of tension between Baku and Yerevan over Karabakh.

He said that Iranian and Azeri officials as well as officials from other neighboring and friendly countries should intensify their efforts to peacefully settle the dispute.

He added that Iran is interested in expanding its relations with Azerbaijan. (IRNA)

Greek Daily: U.S. Embargo on Iran De Facto Collapses

ATHENS — Major Greek afternoon daily *"Eksousia"* said the American D'amato Bill which threatens foreign companies with sanctions if they invest over $40 million in Iran's energy sector has de facto collapsed.

The paper said the European Union and other countries are putting pressure on Washington to cancel the bill, while more and more Western oil companies are seeking to sign agreements with Tehran on exploration and search for oil in Iran.

Eksousia referred to recent statements by Iran's Oil Minister Gholamreza Agazadeh that negotiations with two Western oil firms, the French total and the British-Dutch royal/dutch shell, were proceeding at a swift pace. *(IRNA)*

French National: West's Anti-Iran Propaganda Biased

QOM — A French Muslim national Jamil Balehi said here on Tuesday that the propaganda campaign launched by the West and the U.S. against Iran is "biased".

Balehi, who is on a round the world tour on foot, arrived in this holy city this morning. He has already travelled to 85 countries on foot and intends to walk to other parts of the world.

Unfortunately, he said, Western nations are unaware of the active presence of Iranian women in social and executive affairs in Iran.

He said Iran is a country with rich culture and warm-blooded and sentimental people. *(IRNA)*

Islamic Group in U.S. Calls For Boycott of Sportswear Company Nike for Insulting Islam

ATHENS — A prominent American Islamic organizer has urged Arab and Muslim states to boycott business with the American sportswear giant Nike, saying that the American company has used the Arabic word "Allah" on its shoes, which have been sold across the U.S and several other countries.

Nihad Awad, Executive Director of National Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), told the newspaper Arab News that "all of us are working on this boycott proposal until Nike stops using this design."

Saudi Arabia is a multimillion dollar market for nike and other casual footwear manufactures. This however, is not the first incident of its type involving Nike and the Muslim community.

In 1995 also, Nike agreed to remove a billboard deemed offensive to Muslims following a similar protest by C.A.I.R.

Awad, who is travelling with a pair of the shoes with the design of "Allah" on it, told Arab News that the Oregon-based company insulted Muslims.

C.A.I.R has demanded that Nike tender a public apology for using this logo on its athletic shoes. Awad said he called on senior Nike officials and designers to stop the insult and requested them to participate in a sensitivity training programme about Islam.

Awad, who had been invited by the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs during haj this year, urged Muslim distributors in the Arab world to put nike on "the boycott list for three to five years". *(IRNA)*

30 Percent of World's Carpet Markets Belong to Iran

GORGAN — Iran holds 30 percent of the world's carpet markets, Deputy Constructionn Jihad Minister for rural development and industries Karim Karimi said here on Tuesday.

Speaking at a sceintific meeting on Turkman carpets held in the city of Gorgan, he said "by implementing new policies we hope to gain more shares in the world markets."

Iran's share in the world's carpet markets stood at $330 million in the year 1974, while the amount rose to $2.4 billion in the years 1993 and 94 respectively.

Karimi predicted that the earnings from carpet exports would reach $17.5 billion by the end of 2021. *(IRNA)*

Initial Stages of Salman Fateh Maneuvers Successfully Conducted

TEHRAN — Iranian forces have successfully carried out the first and second stages of a war game in the Persian Gulf, it was announced here on Tuesday.

The first part of the maneuvers, code-named "Salman Fateh" consisted of commando and anti-commando operations on land and sea, airlifting of personnel by helicopters and mine sweeping operations.

At the second stage, participant forces carried out various defence operations against possible attacks with both conventional and chemical weapons, practicing methods of containing the impacts of such agents.

The third stage of the military exercise including attacks by Iranian marines on hypothetical enemy positions and air raids on pre-determined posts is to start soon. *(IRNA)*

International Confab on Afforestation Opens in Beijing

BEIJING — The 11th International Meeting on Afforestation in Asia opened here Tuesday morning.

Representatives from over 30 Asian countries faced with desertification are attending the three-day meeting.

Iran's Minister of Construction Jihad Gholamreza Forouzesh, heading an expert delegation is representing the Islamic Republic at the meeting.

Precarious dimensions of desertification in different regions of Asia as well as possible solutions to this natural problem will be reviewed in the meeting.

The Saudi Arabian envoy, speaking for the Arab League, protested the address by the Israeli deputy agriculture minister when he was about to deliver his speech. Other Islamic countries supported this opposition. Consequently, the Israeli minister was prevented from addressing the meeting.

In an interview with IRNA correspondent here, Forouzesh said that the Islamic Republic of Iran is against the membership of Israel in the Asian Afforestation Organization.

The Islamic countries, once again, demonstrated their opposition to Israel, the Iranian minister noted.

At the end of Tuesday's session, a Saudi Arabian diplomat also told IRNA that the Arab League member states had initially decided to boycott the meeting. However, they arrived at a conclusion to attend it and prevent Israeli participation.

The Arab League's proposal was welcomed by all Islamic countries participating in the meeting, particularly Iran and Indonesia, he concluded. *(IRNA)*

ADB President Says Bank Will Boost Role of Private Sector

FUKUOKA, Japan — The Asian Development Bank (ADB) wound up its 30th annual meeting here Tuesday with President Mitsuo Sato expressing confidence about the bank's future as the new century approaches.

"All the governors renewed their commitment to the development of the Asia-Pacific region in the 21st century," he told the traditional post-meeting news conference by the head of the Manila-based bank.

"From my perspective," Sato added, "They endorsed my basic philosophy to make the ADB not just a financial institution but a more broadly based development institution."

In his closing remarks on the three-day meeting, Sato said governors from the 56 member countries, including dozens of finance ministers and central bank governors, agreed that regional economies were still strong.

"They were appreciative that economic growth, while slowing down slightly in east and southeast Asia, is spreading to South Asia and to the countries of Indochina which are undertaking various reforms towards market-oriented systems. These trends are welcome and need to be supported further," he said.

"Despite these favorable developments, however, many governors reminded us that the majority of the world's poor are living in Asia," the ADB president said. "Some Asian countries have also paid a high cost for their economic growth in terms of a deteriorating environment."

Sato, a former Japanese Finance Ministry official, said many members had noted that "huge investments and a substantial additional flow of capital continue to be necessary to finance physical and social infrastructure in the region.

"In this connection, they emphasized the increased importance of the bank's catalytic and leveraging role in facilitating such a flow of funds, noting the significant role to be played by the private sector in the development process.

"The bank will therefore continue to promote an enabling environment for private sector investment, and we will further attune our operations to enhance the participation of the private sector, particularly through further development of the financial sector and capital markets of the region." *(AFP)*

Oil, Gas, Transportation at Top of ECO Summit Agenda

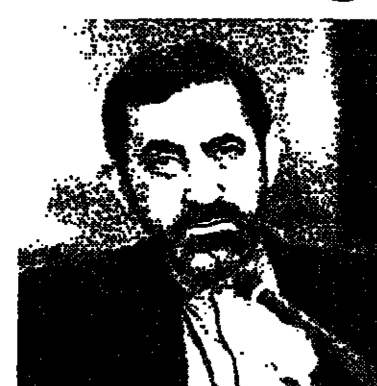
Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said in Ashkhabad on Monday night that issues relating to oil, gas and transportation will top the talks at the 2-day extraordinary summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), which opened here yesterday, IRNA said.

Velayati, currently in Ashkhabad accompanying President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, further said that the final statement of the ECO foreign ministers adopted in Tehran recently will form the core of discussions in the summit.

Investment in the project for transfer of Central Asian oil and gas both in the region and outside the region will be discussed at the summit, he said.

The project was the main motive promoting Turkmenistan to



propose hosting the summit, which was accepted by the ECO members, Velayati said.

Transfer of Central Asian gas and oil is of immense importance to the ECO member countries since the region enjoys abundant gas and oil reserves. Tehran can help them make optimal use of their resources, Velayati said adding Iran enjoys strategic geographical location, easy access to high seas and extensive pipeline network for transfer of gas and oil.

The foreign minister also said the pipeline project to transfer Turkmen gas to Iran is going ahead and part of it has been completed.

According to the $190 million project, to become operational within next six months, Turkmen gas will be transferred to Neka, northern Iran, through a 200-km pipeline.

In the first stage, transfer of two billion cubic meters of gas per year has been envisaged, the amount is to be increased to eight billion cubic meters a year later.

Last ECO summit was held in May, 1996 in Ashkhabad and the next is scheduled to be held in Kyrgyzstan.

Iran Telecom Active in International Tenders

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Managing Director of the Telecommunications Company of Iran (TCI), Mohammad Jaafar Zabihi, said Tuesday that the company plays an active part in international tenders by providing technical and engineering services, IRNA reported.

He said that the TCI has currently undertaken the installation and operation of the 7000 km optical fiber project in Turkmenistan which is part of the grand Shanghai-Frankfurt project.

He added that the TCI is in charge of the entire stages of the project, including the supply of optical fibers, technical equipment, installing, execution, testing and putting the project into operation as well as training the Turkmen telecommunication staff.

He also stated that the TCI has at present won two international tenders which are in the stages of signing the contract.

It has participated in four other biddings and is awaiting the outcome.

The managing director of TCI announced that the value of these projects exceeds tens of millions of dollars.

Zabihi pointed out that TCI's participation at these tenders come at a time when more powerful competitors like 'Alcatel' of France, 'Siemens' of Germany and 'Ericsson' of Sweden have announced their readiness to go ahead with these projects.

TCI has also organized specialized training courses for the telecommunication experts and staff from some regional countries.

13th COMSEC Meeting Winds Up

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The 13th meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference's (OIC) Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMSEC) concluded its work in Ankara Monday afternoon by stressing expansion of trade cooperation among Islamic countries and activities of the Islamic Development Bank.

According to IRNA, the participants in the three-day meeting in their final statement condoled the Iranian nation on the disasterous quake in eastern Iran on Saturday.

The meeting outlined the agenda of the COMSEC ministerial meeting to be held in Istanbul on November 1-5.

The committee will propose a plan for expansion of commercial and economic relations as well as joint investments. It also calls for broadening the activities of the Islamic Development Bank.

The statement also stressed adoption of coordinated stances by the member countries at the World Trade Organization and technical assistance of IDB to countries intending to join the the organization.

Representatives from Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Maghreb, Uganda, Cameroon, Kuwait, Turkey and the Palestine authority attended the meeting.

Turkey Tenders for Gas Pipe Project

ANKARA — Turkey is to put a project of laying pipelines for transfer of Iran's natural gas to Turkey out to international tender next month.

Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Deputy Minister Oghur Doghan said on Monday that the project involves transfer of Iran's gas from Erzurum to Ankara via Sivas.

Doghan observed that Turkey had earlier called for bids on implementation of the first phase of the project, that is laying pipelines from Iran's border to Erzurum and arrangements are being made for implementation of the second and third phases of the project.

He explained that a 410-km 40-inch pipe is to be laid down between Erzurum and Sivas, with another one which will bifurcate into two seperate lines between Sivas and Ankara, one a 40-inch pipe stretching 161 kms and the other a 303-km 36-inch pipe.

He added that 48 Turkish and foreign companies had received notes specifying conditions for taking part in the bid.

Turkish official said that under a contract concluded between Iran and Turkey, a natural gas pipeline would be constructed between Iran's Tabriz (East Azarbaijan) and Ankara.

Some two billion cubic meters of gas is expected to be transferred to Turkey from Iran in the initial phase of the project slated for 1998, while the export would amount to ten billion cubic meters annually in the coming phases on a regular basis within a period of 23 years. *(IRNA)*

Important Oil Discovery in Egypt

ATHENS — The first discovery of oil in Upper Egypt, made 40 days ago by Repsol of Spain, may be the most important find in the country in the last decade because it extends the oil frontier southward and should encourage international companies to explore in virgin areas along the Red Sea and in southwestern Egypt, Egyptian oil industry experts said.

According to a report in the *Middle East Times* weekly, Wafik al-Guindi, president of Forum Exploration and a well-known exploration consultant, said the presence of the upper cretaceous formation in the Upper Egypt concession is very promising.

"This formation is very prolific in generating oil and gas so it's a very important sign for additional new finds in this area both in the cretaceous and in deeper horizons," Guindi explained.

In data submitted by Repsol at a meeting of the foreign oil companies operating in Egypt, black shales were reported in the Upper Egypt concession.

"This could mean the paleozoic strata. If so, then I consider this a breakthrough in exploration in this part of the world. Black shales are very rich source rocks to generate oil and gas," Guindi said.

He pointed out that the size of the Kom Ombo basin is big, "two or three times the size of the Gulf of Suez basin (the largest producing area in Egypt to date).

Egyptian Oil Minister Hamdi al-Banbi recently visited the discovery site 60 kilometers northwest of Aswan in the Kom Ombo region.

Under the agreement it signed with the Egyptian government, Repsol agreed to spend $12 million and to drill three wells. The huge Upper Egypt concession covers 80,000 Sqm in the Qena and Aswan governorates.

Two other companies, Global Natural Resources and Apache of the U.S. have taken a second Upper Egypt concession, east Beni Zuef, and are expected to begin drilling there later this year. The 27,600 sqm area is located in the Beni Suef and Fayoum governorates.

The companies agreed to spend $11 million and to drill five wells in the block. *(IRNA)*

High Level Iranian Economic and Trade Team Arrives in Kuwait

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iranian Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Morteza Mohammad Khan heading an economic delegation arrived in Kuwait Monday in an official visit, IRNA reported.

The visit is taking place at the invitation of the Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Nasser Abdullah ar-Rodhan.

The Iranian delegation includes deputies of the Finance Ministry, officials of the Central Bank, the Chamber of Commerce and Investment Organization.

Iranian delegation was to call on the Amir of Kuwait, acting prime minister and foreign minister as well as the finance minister.

The Iranian finance minister and his entourage were to hold wide-ranging talks with their Kuwaiti counterparts as well as the economic, commerce, banking and investment officials of that country.

The manifold axes of the talks will include finalizing the draft agreement to encourage and bolster investment, agreement to avoid double taxation, reviewing agreements on economic cooperation and strengthening banking ties.

Mohammad Khan and the delegation accompanying him will also meet Kuwaiti businessmen and prominent entrepreneurs and Iranians residing in Kuwait.

India Proposes 'South Asian Economic Community' at SAARC Summit

NEW DELHI — India on Monday launched a major offensive in regional economic diplomacy at the 9th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit with Prime Minister I.K. Gujral formally proposing an initiative into the contours of a South Asian Economic Community (SAEC), report Indian news agencies.

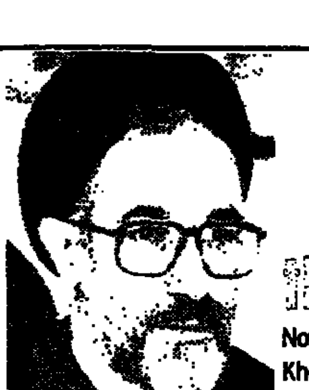
Addressing inaugural session while handing over the SAARC chairmanship to hosts, the Maldives, Indian premier made a forceful plea with the summit leaders to ponder over his proposal and suggested "we should entrust the commerce ministers and the committee on economic cooperation with deciding on modalities for realizing this goal".

Gujral said "this project would cover crucial issues vital for our shared economic future, such as a regional investment regime, export-oriented joint ventures, easy movement of goods and capital, enlargement of our export potential by raising quality standards and expanded regional market, human resource and skills development, scientific and technological cooperation, upgrading and augmenting of regional infrastructure and regional diffusion of financial and other services".

The Indian initiative evoked mixed reactions among the members of the seven-nation SAARC.

Welcoming the launch of the third round of South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA) shortly to further accelerate the pace of trade liberalization in the region, the prime minister called for further extension of Tariff concessions to cover all product lines, accompanied by dismantling of non-tariff barriers.

He said this would help fulfil the objective of a South Asian Free Trdae Area (SAFTA) by the turn of the century or very shortly thereafter as pledged by the seven nation grouping. *(IRNA)*



Statement of Women's Society of Islamic Republic of Iran on the Seventh Presidential Election

Now that we are at the final days of the flagbearer of construction, supporter of the Late Imam Khomeini and the Supreme Leader, President Hashemi Rafsanjani's presidency, relying on the attentions of the Almighty, supporting and participating in the forthcoming presidential elections is a heavy responsibility for the individuals as well as political and cultural groups and societies of the country to take firm steps toward further stabilization of the Islamic system in Iran. The conscious, active, and pleased participation of people from all walks of life and their clear and firm criteria for selecting the head of Executive Force, can manifest a new, serious, and exciting stage in our Islamic and revolutionary society. The Women's Society of Islamic Republic of Iran, which has started its activities with the consent of the Late Imam Khomeini and the Supreme Leader, due to the special situation of the Islamic system and its international reputation as well as the need to maintain and safeguard this reputation in all cultural, political, economic, and military fields along with following the guidelines of Imam Khomeini, takes it as its responsibility to announce the best candidate for presidency of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Upon an emphasis by the Supreme Leader on protecting and safeguarding the valuable heritage of the martyrs as well as his criteria for the next best president (piety and management), this society supports and announces **Hojjatoleslam Seyed Mohammad Khatami** as the best candidate for the seventh presidential election. Imam Khomeini has called **Hojjatoleslam Khatami** his scholar, pious and committed son. Many years of successful management and cultural & executive responsibilities are solid evidences of his efficiency for the presidency. Besides his deserving capabilities as his personality, belief and ability in management, trust and acceptability, **Hojjatoleslam Seyed Mohammad Khatami** deserves the folowing qualifications, which the society expects from the head of the Executive Force:

1- Believing in Mohammedan pure Islam and the valuable principle of Velayat-e Faqih;

2- Believing in the preservation of Imam Khomeini's path and extension of his bright thoughts and policies in all cultural, political, and economic aspects;

3- Protector of the valuable heritage of the martyrs and showing gratitude to the devotees of Islamic Revolution in words and deeds;

4- Supporter of the underprivileged and the oppressed;

5- Believing in the combat against the enemies of Islam, especially the criminal U.S.A. and the international Zionism;

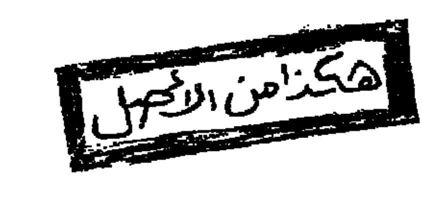
6- Believing in planning for the extension of Islamic values in the society and familiar with the problems and issues of the youth;

7- Believing in working with all efficient forces, faithful to the Islamic Republic;

8- Showing gratitude to the noble nation of Iran and believing in their massive participation in all fields;

9- Believing in maintaining the principles and jurisdiction of Islamic system in the world;

10- Believing in the continuation of the construction works until fully attaining self-sufficiency. Following the studies and investigations, while paying tribute to other candidates, The Women's Society of Islamic Republic of Iran, believes **Hojjatolesalm Khatami** can create new horizons for the establishment of Islamic and revolutionary ideals as well as fulfillment of Imam Khomeini's views and also open new ways for further emergence of men and women's capabilities in all fields. Therefore, the Women's Society of Islamic Republic of Iran invites all fellow countrymen to participate actively in the elections and support and vote for **Hojjatoleslam Khatami**, thus help him in execution of his higher objectives, which is continuing the successful plans carried out during the two periods of sacred defense and construction in the governments of Engineer Mir Hossein Mousavi and Hojjatoleslam Hashemi Rafsanjani.



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TEHRAN TIMES

MAY 14, 1997

SPORTS SUMMARY

Tehran Times Service

FOOTBALL

Premiership Stand Firm on Boro

LONDON: English Premier League chiefs are confident they will be vindicated if Middlesbrough go to the High Court in a bid to reclaim the three points which cost them their premiership place.

Middlesbrough chairman Steve Gibson has refused to rule out a legal challenge to win back the points deducted for failing to play Blackburn on December 21.

But the Premier League, whose original ruling was upheld when Middlesbrough's appeal against the punishment was heard in March, believe the courts would also rule against the club.

"It's a matter for middlesbrough what they wish to do, but we believe we've acted properly throughout and that we are on very firm ground," said spokesman Mike Lee.

Wilson Gets His Peers' Vote

LONDON: Barnsley boss Danny Wilson was named manager of the year by his peers in the English game for taking the unfashionable Yorkshiremen into the top-flight for the first time in their history.

Wilson won the managers' vote ahead of premiership manager of the year Alex Ferguson, who led Manchester United to their fourth title in five seasons.

Colin Todd, whose Bolton side scored 100 goals and just failed to notch 100 points, picked up the first division prize.

David Jones of Stockport, who reached the semifinals of the Coca-Cola Cup as well as winning promotion, won the second division award while Micky Adams of Fulham was the division three choice.

Radebe to Skipper South Africa Against England

JOHANNESBURG: Lucas Radebe, the only English-based squad member, will lead South Africa in a friendly against England at Old Trafford on May 24.

The 27-year-old defender replaced long-serving skipper Neil Tovey for a World Cup victory over Zaire last month and won a vote of confidence from national coach Clive Barker.

The squad also includes three Italian-based players in striker Philemon Masinga, a former teammate of Radebe at Leeds, defender Mark Fish and midfielder Eric Tinkler.

TENNIS

Muster on Form as Ferreira Tumbles Out

ROME: Thomas Muster made a winning start to the defense of his Italian Open title here, but there was no joy for seeds Wayne Ferreira and Mark Philippoussis.

Muster erased the memory of an early exit in Monte Carlo, sweeping to a 6-3, 6-2 victory over Italian wild card Entrant Marzio Martelli.

But ninth seeded Ferreira missed five match points to allow Magnus Larsson a 4-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7/5) win. Morocco's Karim Alami beat Philippoussis 6-2, 6-0.

Britain's Greg Rusedski was another casualty, losing two tie-breaks to Spain's Albert Portas.

Graf Back in Action With Doubles Loss

BERLIN: Former world number one Steffi Graf returned to action here following three months out with a knee injury in a doubles clash alongside Argentina's Ines Gorrochategui.

But it was a losing return as the pair went down 4-6, 6-3, 3-6 to Rika Hiraki of Japan and Florencia Labat of Argentina.

In the singles, Graf, who has a first round bye, is to face 21-year-old Chanda Rubin of the United States, who is ranked 27 in the world.

CRICKET

Javed Stuns World Champs

GWALIOR: Aquib Javed knocked out world champions Sri Lanka with a fiery new ball burst here to resurrect Pakistan's faltering Independence Cup campaign.

Aquib snapped up four early wickets, including two in the first over, and one more in his second spell after Pakistan had piled up an imposing 289 for six.

Sri Lanka scored 259 in reply to lose by 30 runs and keep the depleted Pakistanis alive in the four-nation event after the 22-run defeat to New Zealand in the opening match.

FORMULA ONE

Ferrari Boss Wants More

MARANELLO: Ferrari may have celebrated 50 years of motor racing with a stunning victory in Monaco, but team chief Luca di Montezemolo said it wasn't enough.

After the team's inconsistent year in 1996, Di Montezemolo made it clear that Schumacher's victory and Irvine's third place in Monaco should not be another flash in the pan.

"We have to be very happy about such a wonderful result," the Ferrari president said. "But let's be clear about one thing — all we did was our duty.

"Our objective must be to win on a regular basis."

Ferrari are now top of the drivers' championship, with Schumacher and top of the constructors' championship.

SWIMMING

Australian First to Swim From Cuba to Florida

MIAMI: Australian swimmer Susie Maroney became the first person to swim solo from Cuba to Florida, covering the approximately 200 kilometers (124 miles) from Havana to Key West in only 25 hours, organizers said.

"I'm so glad to be here. It's such a long way," Maroney told reporters moments after swimming up to Fort Taylor Beach in Key West, the southernmost point of the United States, at 12:21 p.m. (1621 GMT).

"We had strong currents," she noted, explaining why she was able to make the swim in far less time than the 40 hours estimated.

Knicks Go Up 3-1 Over Miami



NEW YORK, United States (May 12): New York Knicks' Chris Childs (L) drives past the Miami Heat's Tim Hardaway in the first quarter of game four of the Eastern Conference semifinals at Madison Square Garden in New York. The Knicks won 89-76.

(AFP PHOTO)

NEW YORK — John Starks came alive with 21 points and Patrick Ewing added 20 as the New York Knicks scored a solid 89-76 victory over the Miami Heat Monday to take a 3-1 lead in their Eastern Conference semifinal series.

Starks, who hit just 5-of-24 shots from the field in the first three games of the series, shot 9-of-12 this time.

"I needed to come out and take charge and play more aggressively," the NBA's sixth man of the year said. "I needed to be John Starks. Patrick Ewing kind of burned me, he prompted me. I guess you could call it. Now we need to go to Miami and take care of business."

New York could close out the series by winning game 5 Wednesday night at Miami. The Knicks, who are 6-1 in the postseason, have won three of four games at Miami this season.

The Utah Jazz, up 3-1 in their best-of-seven Western Conference semifinal, were hosting the Los Angeles Lakers in Monday's other NBA Playoff game.

Allan Houston scored 15 of his 17 points in the first half when the Knicks built a 15-point lead. Houston had 10 points and Starks eight in a decisive 21-5 second-quarter run.

"Allen had a big first half," said Ewing. "They couldn't stop him."

"We got their best game of the series, without a doubt," said Miami Coach Pat Riley. "They were just excellent in all facets of the game.

"They outplayed us, that's the way I feel," said the Heat's star guard Tim Hardaway. "They outplayed us."

New York got good production from every player. "It was a total team effort," Ewing said.

Charles Oakley had nine rebounds and sparked the team with his hustling, diving style. Larry Johnson, who had just eight points in game 3 Sunday, scored nine of his 15 in the first quarter.

Miami hit just 3-of-13 shots from the field and missed 7-of-15 free throws in the second quarter when they were outscored 28-14, giving New York a 51-36 halftime lead. The Knicks shot 60 percent from the field (9-of-15) in the quarter.

Hardaway finished with 14 points, but was held to three in the second half.

"It was a combination of turnovers and free throws that hurt us again tonight," said Hardaway.

Center Alonzo Mourning had just 13 points on 5-of-16 shooting from the field and fouled out with 4:59 left in the game after several physical moments with Ewing and Oakley.

"Zo is OK," said Oakley of Mourning. "I like him, so does Patrick. But I can handle him on the boards and Patrick can always outscore him."

Mourning picked up five fouls in a span of 12:07 of the second half. He fouled out with the Knicks comfortably ahead at 78-63. Before fouling out, Mourning shot an air ball at the free throw line, where he was 3-of-8 for the game.

"We will play better in Miami," said Mourning. "We are going home and you can bet coach will figure something out. He's burning about this. We think the Knicks got most of the calls. Those contacts out there were not accidental. There is friction between the teams."

"We'll regroup, we'll be ready Wednesday night," said Riley.

Miami, which led the NBA with a 32-9 road record during the regular season, is 0-4 on the road in the playoffs and averaged just 78.8 points in the four losses.

The Knicks built their biggest lead at 86-66 after a basket by Chris Childs with 2:20 left in the game.

The Heat shot 38 percent from the field and missed 14-of-32 free throws.

"I'm just mystified at the free throw shooting," said Riley. "I have no explanation for it."

The Knicks were 51 percent from the field and converted 15-of-21 free throws. (Reuter)

Chess Champion Loses Competitive Spirit in Man Versus Machine

NEW YORK — In the end, world chess champion Garry Kasparov said he could have beaten the computer. He just wasn't in the mood.

On May 4, he resigned from a game against IBM's Deep Blue computer that later analysis showed could have been played to a draw. Over the next three games, Kasparov could do no better than a draw.

Then Sunday, in the equivalent of a meltdown, the man who some have called the best player ever resigned from the final, winner-take-all game after just one hour and 19 moves.

Michael Khodarkovski, a friend of his, said it was the first time Kasparov has ever lost a chess match.

Afterward, Kasparov blamed himself, but refused to admit he had been fairly beaten.

"I wouldn't take this game as a serious one. I lost my competitive spirit," he said.

"I think eventually the machine will prevail, but I wouldn't take today as the day of doom," he continued. "I'm the best in the world and if I lose, it's a question of my mistake."

The emotionless metal opponent seemed to have won the battle of wits as well as the battle on the board. Over the eight-day period, the stress appeared to rattle the 34-year-old Russian.

"This match has exposed Garry's weaknesses as a human — that he is a very high-strung individual," said Ron Henley, a grandmaster from Manhattan. "He should have been able to put game 2 behind him and go on."

Instead, Kasparov increasingly ascribed human characteristics to the machine, saying after his first loss that he thought he detected intelligent thought by the machine. (AP)



BARCELONA, Spain (May 12): CF Barcelona Coach Bobby Robson (R) and players wait at a terminal at Barcelona's airport after they were evacuated from the plane following a bomb threat. The team was among other passengers en route to Amsterdam for the European Cup Winners final on Wednesday May 14 in Rotterdam against Paris Saint Germain.

(AFP PHOTO)

Iran Calls For Academic Cooperation With Turkmenistan

By Our Correspondent

ASHKHABAD — On the second leg of his two Central Asian nation tour, Turkmenistan, Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani called for academic cooperation between Iran and Turkmenistan here yesterday.

Iran is ready to share its experiences with the Turkmen Republic through their universities, the Iranian president added.

He stressed that Iran and Turkmenistan back deep cooperation between the universities of the two countries.

In a meeting with the professors and students of Makhtoum-Qoli University in Ashkhabad, President Rafsanjani said that two languages of Farsi and Turkmen are expected to be further propagated among the two nations.

Brawl in Israeli Labor Party

TEL-AVIV — Former Prime Minister Shimon Peres battled his main rival in Israel's opposition Labor Party Tuesday in an effort to retain some power after he step down as the group's leader in June.

Ehud Barak, a former foreign minister and the leading candidate to take over the Labor leadership, has staunchly resisted Peres' effort, fearing it will undermine his hold over the party.

The vehement dispute delayed a meeting of Labor members in Tel-Aviv Tuesday as sides of the two men tried desperately to prevent a walkout by one camp or the other.

After being defeated a year ago in national elections for prime minister by right-wing nationalist leader Benjamin Netanyahu, Peres announced that he would not seek reelection at a Labor Party congress in June.

(AFP)

Palestinians Agree to U.S.-Brokered Talks

GAZA CITY — The Palestinians agreed Tuesday to an initiative by U.S. envoy Dennis Ross for the first direct talks with Israeli negotiators in two months, a top adviser to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat said.

"In principle, the meeting which was suggested by Ross will take place on Wednesday," Nabil abu Rudeina told AFP.

He said the Palestinians would draw up their delegation Tuesday evening for the meeting, for which the venue has not yet been set.

Earlier on Tuesday reports said a U.S. initiative to bring Israelis and Palestinians back to direct talks for the first time in two months ran into trouble Tuesday once more over the key dispute about Jewish settlements.

U.S. envoy Dennis Ross has proposed an informal meeting between the two sides' negotiators in a bid to get around a deadlock over Israeli settlement activity which has silenced negotiations since mid-March.

After reports the two sides could meet as early as Tuesday at the residence of U.S. ambassador Martin Indyk, top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat said Tuesday that Ross' proposal had not yet been accepted.

"Up to now nothing has crystallized for a three-way meeting with the Americans, Israelis and the Palestinians," he told a news conference.

He insisted such a meeting focus on Palestinian demands for a halt in construction of Jewish settlements in disputed East Bait-ul-Moqaddas and the West Bank before a full resumption of negotiations, a condition which Israel has rejected.

"The first step must be the halt of Israel's unilateral actions, especially all settlement activity," he said.

"If Ross thinks he can revive the peace process by concentrating on procedural matters like holding meetings he is mistaken," he said.

From the Israeli side, government spokesman Moshe Fogel said there was "not yet a final d ion regarding the concept of the meeting."

Palestinians say the settlement on a hilltop called Har Homa by Israelis and Jebel abu Ghneim by Arabs is designed to pre-empt their goal of making East Bait-ul-Moqaddas the capital of a future state.

(AFP)

Catholic Killed in N. Ireland Sectarian Attack

BELFAST — The body of a 62-year-old Roman Catholic was found on a Northern Ireland country road on Tuesday after what police said was a sectarian murder.

He had been abducted from a club of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), in Irish Nationalist and Catholic Sports Group, on Monday night and was shot after a struggle, police at Randalstown, scene of the crime, said.

It was thought to be the third sectarian killing this year after the shooting of a Catholic father of nine in Belfast in April and the beating to death of a Catholic in Portadown earlier this month.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the killing but Protestant Loyalists were under suspicion.

The killing took place amid fears that Loyalist extremists, who want the province to remain British, have abandoned a ceasefire they declared in October 1994.

(Reuter)

China Accuses U.S. of Grand Conspiracy

BEIJING — China accused the United States Tuesday of a grand plot to destabilize the Beijing government by criticizing its human rights record.

"Human rights diplomacy is an important step in the realization of the United States' global strategy," a signed editorial in the *China Daily* warned.

"It was directed at the former Soviet Union and East European countries, and after the collapse of the Soviet Union is directed mainly at China," the editorial said.

It accused the United States of inventing "human rights diplomacy" in the late seventies to counter the Cold War power of the Soviet Union and to fight against socialist countries.

"The United States exerts its political influence on other countries to change their internal and external policies and their political systems," it said.

"This is an act of hegemony as well as an infringement upon other countries' sovereignty," it added.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, China views the United States as its major competitor for political control over Asia in the 21st century.

(AFP)

Highlights

MOSCOW — Clashes between two Muslim sects in the Russian Republic of Dagestan, bordering Chechnya, left one dead and three injured, press reports said here Tuesday.

BAGHDAD — Iraq has received over 600,000 tons of food since its oil-for-food deal with the United Nations went into effect in December, a UN official said on Tuesday.

Israeli Ambassador to Jordan Resigns

BAIT-UL-MOQADDAS — Israel's ambassador to Jordan has quit after only a week on the job after he was not informed of secret talks between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Jordan's King Hussein, Israel radio reported Tuesday.

The public radio said Oded Eran, who took up his post as Israel's second ambassador to Jordan on May 5, was on his way back to Bait-ul-Moqaddas.

An official at the Foreign Ministry would not immediately comment on the report.

According to the radio, Eran quit in protest after failing to be informed in advance of a secret night-time meeting between Netanyahu and King Hussein at the Jordanian Red Sea resort of Aqaba on Thursday.

Eran's resignation followed a dispute last year between the prime minister's office and the Foreign Ministry regarding the oversight of diplomatic affairs, the radio said.

Foreign Minister David Levy boycotted government meetings for two weeks after Netanyahu visited Jordan without a representative from his ministry present.

A subsequent agreement with Netanyahu stipulated that the Foreign Ministry would be more involved in such high-level meetings.

Netanyahu spokesman Shai Bazak told the radio the prime minister had informed Levy of the secret meeting with King Hussein and it was up to the ministry to update the ambassador.

(AFP)

S. Korean Prosecutors Hunt Slush Money Hidden by President's Son

SEOUL — South Korean prosecutors are focusing their investigation of President Kim Young-Sam's son on how he had raised millions of dollars in slush money, they said Tuesday.

"We have found a huge amount of slush money hidden by Kim Hyun-Chul but we have not yet determined what charges we should press against him," senior prosecutor Shim Jae-Ryun told journalists.

Prosecutors officially confirmed that Kim Hyun-Chul's suspected funds, uncovered so far, amount to 12 billion won ($13.5 million).

The money included seven billion won managed by Kim Ki-Sup, a former deputy head of the powerful intelligence agency, who laundered the money and entrusted it to five mid-ranking business groups.

Kim Ki-Sup was dismissed in March after controversy erupted over Hyun-Chul's alleged involvement in wrongdoings.

The other five billion won was managed by a close associate, Lee Sung-Ho.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

ISLAMIC...

Ziyee-Far further expressed opposition of the Islamic Human Rights Commission with the closing down of Islamic schools in Turkey, branding it religious intolerance.

The Islamic Human Rights Commission also appealed to UN Human Rights Commission to make Turkey implement Articles 9, 12, 18, 19 and 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

He further called on the Turkish Government to do its utmost to prevent interest groups from restricting freedom of speech.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

ERBAKAN...

"The holding of maneuvers for testing the equipment to be bought from Israel is part of an agreement. But these maneuvers have been postponed to the upcoming years," Erbakan said.

He was responding to a question by reporters on reactions by Arab states to the planned maneuvers by Turkey, Israel and the United States in the eastern Mediterranean sea this summer.

Israel, Turkey and the United States agreed on the maneuvers during a visit by the deputy chief of the Turkish general staff to Israel last week.

Several officials from Erbakan's ruling pro-Islamic Welfare party have also denounced the military's move to agree to the holding of joint exercises with Israel.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

ASSESSING...

ple will cast their vote for one candidate. Each segment of the population, inspired by its information and awareness of issues, will vote for a candidate of its choice. The candidate obtaining the highest number of votes will have the popular mandate and the leadership of the system will accordingly confirm him as the new president. In accordance with his mandate, he will be the leading executive official of the country. In this manner the people play the important role of deciding the fate of their country by choosing the person on whose shoulders they have entrusted the highest responsibility of executive leadership.

The sensitivity of the present election and the criteria the people choose to follow in selecting the candidate of their choice may be analyzed taking into consideration the three factors mentioned below:

Continuation of Policies: Continuation of the construction programs now underway as accepted and authorized policy. These are well articulated in the First and Second Development Plans which the incoming president will necessarily continue. No doubt, the continuation of development and technical projects in progress up to their completion is among the criteria the people have set in selecting their candidate. The people's criteria for choosing the next president based on policies he is likely to adopt is his "executive competency." This important criteria may best be presumed by going over the records of the candidate's activities.

Regulative Policies: Manner of dealing with justice, social welfare and economic development are important and relevant factors which will be taken into account in selecting the incoming president. In this process, the nature of policies towards implementation of the policy of social welfare and economic development should be clarified. In other words, since absolute economic development necessitates a regulation in the situation of social welfare, and absolute social welfare requires regulation in the trend of economic development, people are sensitive to the manner of their candidate's regulative policy. The required feature for resting assured of the regulative policy of the intended candidate is the power of "decision-making". This capability should encompass the totality of the two above-cited factors.

Innovative Policies: Irrespective of executive and decision-making capabilities, the president should enjoy management competency in dealing with new questions both domestic and foreign. Possible crises hitting the country requires a kind of crisis management requisite to the would-be president. Although survey of the records of the candidate hopeful can be useful in evaluating his management efficiency, this factor is doubly sensitive and significant in his capacity as president.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

PAKISTANI...

issues including the "core issue" of Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistani Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmed said.

They also decided to hold the second round of foreign secretary level talks in Islamabad at the end of this month or in early June, he said.

"I must say that we had very good, very warm, very friendly" discussions, Gujral said at a joint press conference on the nearby Island of Kurumba.

Sharif, who later left for a Central Asian leaders' summit in Turkmenistan, said the talks were "very useful and very constructive."

Indian officials were cautious in their reaction, but expressed guarded optimism that the decision to establish a telephone "hotline" between the two prime ministers was a "positive move" to avert any misunderstandings.

Ahmed termed the outcome a breakthrough, saying the decision to set up various working groups "involves a lot of things."

But Indian Foreign Secretary Salman Haider avoided using the word momentous, saying: "I would not like to sum up in a phrase because it is bound to be misleading."

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 2)

INT'L...

dent in Damascus that the relief aid including medicine and foodstuff were sent on the order of the Syrian President Hafiz al-Assad.

A medical delegation, led by Syrian Deputy Health Minister, Tareq al-Sheikh is accompanying the relief aid.

Ash-Shatti said Damascus was ready to send more aid to Iran, medical teams in particular.

The Riyadh-based Persian Gulf Development Program announced Monday that it has allocated $100,000 for the victims of Khorasan earthquake.

France, Switzerland, Pakistan and Kuwait have sent food and medicine for quake victims of Iran on board in five flights. Temporary settlement in tents of the victims of the quake was finished Monday night.

A local official in Qaen said that to improve relief operations at a better pace, as many as 7,919 tents, 22,000 blankets and a substantial amount of food, clothing, footware and other necessary things were being distributed among quake victims.

In related reports, a number of countries have sent relief to quake victims in the province. The Red Crescent Society of Turkey on Monday sent 20 tons of goods, comprising of sugar, medicines, blankets, cooking oil and rice.

On Monday the Kuwaiti government sent 38.5 tons of food for quake victims in Iran. The contribution of the Kuwaiti government was taken to mashhad on board a 707 cargo plane.

In a statement Monday evening, the Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring announced the approval of a grant of $120,000 for relief supplies for the survivors, which he said would be channelled through the international federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Society.

The UK government also announced it was sending $160,000 for relief efforts. International Development Minister Clare Short stressed money was being sent to avoid uncoordinated relief measures and "bundling things on to aeroplanes" without studying real needs.

هکذا من الأصل

Key Events in Hong Kong's History

HONG KONG — The following is a chronology of major events since the colonization of Hong Kong by Britain.

1840-42 - First Anglo-Chinese "Opium" War. Victorious British wrest Hong Kong from China

Jan 26, 1841 - British troops occupy Hong Kong



MAO

Aug 29, 1842 - Treaty of Nanking recognizes and confirms British occupation.

June 26, 1843 - Hong Kong is proclaimed crown colony, and Sir Henry Pottinger becomes its first governor.

1860 - Convention of Peking cedes Kowloon Peninsula across from Hong Kong island to Britain after second Anglo-Chinese Opium War of 1856-58.

1898 - China leases rural new territories area and 235 outlying islands to Britain for 99 years.

1911 - Revolution overthrows China's imperial Qing Dynasty.

1941-1945 - Japanese military occupation of Hong Kong

1949 - Mao Zedong proclaims the People's Republic of China.

1972 - Britain and China establish diplomatic relations.

1979 - Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping receives Hong Kong Governor Sir Murray McLehose in Beijing in March. Problems posed by the end of the lease in 1997 are raised. Deng says Hong Kong can rest at ease.

1982 - Margaret Thatcher visits Beijing. Deng refuses request for continued British administration of Hong Kong after 1997, but he agrees to open negotiations on handover.



DENG

1983 - Britain and China begin negotiations on Hong Kong.

1984 - British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and China's Premier Zhao Ziyang sign the joint declaration in Beijing on December 19, requiring Britain to transfer sovereignty of the colony to China at midnight June 30, 1997. China pledges to grant Hong Kong a "high degree of autonomy" and permits it to retain its capitalist system for 50 years after 1997.

1989 - Military crackdown on democracy movement in Beijing's Tiananmen Square with heavy loss of life. In Hong Kong a million people join protests. Relations with Beijing deteriorate.

1990 - China promulgates the basic law, Hong Kong's post-1997 constitution.

1992 - Chris Patten, former party chairman of Britain's ruling Conservatives, becomes governor of Hong Kong. Patten launches electoral reforms. China denounces the move. Relations between the two countries plummet.



THATCHER

1993 - China sets up a Preliminary Working Committee (PWC) to shape Hong Kong's first post-1997 administration.

1995 - In September, Hong Kong holds its most representative legislative elections to date under the auspices of the Patten reforms. Democrats take 70 percent of the direct vote.

1996 - China sets up the preparatory committee replacing the PWC, to oversee Hong Kong's transition in line with the basic law and decisions of China's Parliament.

March, 1996 - British Prime Minister John Major visits the colony and says "Hong Kong will never walk alone". Pledges Britain will fight for 1984 treaty to be respected by China.

November 1996 - China forms selection committee to choose first post-colonial chief executive and provisional legislature.

December 11, 1996 - Selection committee picks shipping Magnate Tung Chee-Hwa as chief executive-designate.

December 21, 1996 - Selection committee picks 60 member provisional legislature. Includes 10 politicians defeated in 1995 polls.



ZIYANG

January 25 - Provisional legislature holds first meeting in Shenzhen, China to avoid legal challenge from Hong Kong Democrats who argue its activities are unconstitutional.

February 19 - Hong Kong shrugs off death of Chinese Leader Deng Xiaoping with barely a ripple, markets unaffected.

March 12 - Hong Kong unveils first annual budget drawn up jointly with China, for year straddling handover, with no major changes to traditional cautious, conservative fiscal policies.

April 11 - Britain closes HMS Tamar naval base on Stonecutter's island in major stage of military withdrawal.

April 21 - First Chinese troops enter Hong Kong as 40-strong advance guard of PLA moves in to prepare garrison facilities for midnight June 30 handover. *(Reuter)*

PRI Risks Congress Majority in Mexican Race

MEXICO CITY — Mexico's ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) is ahead in voter preferences for the July 6 congressional elections, but its majority is in jeopardy, a poll published on Sunday said.

The poll for the *Reforma* and *El Norte* newspapers showed that, excluding undecided voters, the PRI's lead shrank to 39.8 percent in April from 42.3 percent in March, while support for the Conservative National Action Party rose to 32.5 percent from 30.7 percent.

The leftist party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) was trailing. Its support, excluding undecided voters, fell to 19.3 percent in April from 21.7 percent in March.

The poll was carried out among 1,125 voters nationwide between April 25 and May 2. No margin of error was given.

The midterm elections were expected to provide the toughest challenge yet to the PRI, which has ruled Mexico and held a majority in Congress for 68 years.

According to the poll, the ruling party is below the 42.2 percent threshold required for a majority. Three hundred representatives are to be elected, with 200 other congressional seats awarded according to the votes the parties receive.

The PRI is fighting to keep its congressional majority, fearing that an opposition-controlled congress would resist reform proposals by president Ernesto Zedillo.

Reforma said the PRI's lead was partly being eroded by the rise of small parties, which individually account for a fraction of the vote but together mustered 8.4 percent in April, up from 5.1 percent in March, the poll said.

(Reuter)



RAMALLAH, West Bank, (May 9): United States special envoy Dennis Ross (R) and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat speak to the press after the two met Friday. Ross flew to Egypt May 10 after making no progress in overnight talks with Arafat on reviving frozen Israeli-Palestinian talks which are paralyzed by nearly two months of crisis over Israel's building of a new housing project in Arab East Bait-ul-Moqaddas. *(AFP PHOTO)*

Returned Family of Boat People Struggles for Identity in Vietnam

HAIPHONG, Vietnam — Nine years ago, Nguyen Thi Hien and her family were boat people lost in the South China Sea. Now they're adrift in a sea of paperwork.

They're back in Vietnam with less than the little they fled with — not even their names. A bureaucrat's misspelling of a name when they returned has obliterated them from the communist government's all-important registry.

Hien, her husband Hoang Duc Hung and their three children came back to Vietnam six weeks ago, their dream of asylum in the West having died in a Hong Kong refugee detention camp.

Their latest troubles began minutes after Vietnam airlines flight 7911 brought them and more than 110 other boat people to Hanoi on March 21.

Hung's name was misspelled when the Interior Ministry registered him, and the family became lost in Vietnam's byzantine bureaucratic machine. Because of the mistake, Hung cannot get back the identity papers that all Vietnamese must carry.

Without the papers, Hung and Hien can't get a job, they can't rent a house, can't put their children in school. Camped in Hien's mother's two-room home in the industrial port city of Haiphong, they're as idle today as they were for nine years in the Hong Kong camp.

"All we want is to integrate into normal life, but it isn't that easy," Hien said. "In my head all I can think of is a home."

Hung spends his days pleading with local officials to sort out the red tape for getting his name corrected so he can begin rebuilding his life.

"There are limits to what we can do," said Tran Tuan, a local Haiphong People's Committee official who works with returning boat people. "We have no regulations to deal with this problem."

The family's return was part of a huge UN-led effort to resolve the boat people saga, and was based on Vietnam's promise to help the returnees adjust to their new lives without persecution.

Hien hasn't been persecuted. But life as a non-person, cooped up with 14 relatives in a storefront home, isn't easy.

"I have this sadness about failing to reach my dreams," she said. "But the day-to-day worries of life here push the sadness down."

Her 2-year-old son perched on her lap, Hien fumbled nervously for a cup of tea and sank back on a rotting wood plank that serves by night as bed, couch by day. She wore an oversized red-and-black jacket. Her brown, downturned eyes gave her a melancholy air.

"I'm still very confused," said Hien, 34. "I'm not sure how things are going to go. It looks like it's going to be very difficult."

Hien's ordeal began in February 1988, during the time when hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese were fleeing their country by boat to escape a looming economic collapse.

Her husband, an out-of-work ship Welder, sold their home for the equivalent of $450, and they packed a few belongings and their children onto a weather-beaten fishing boat and headed for Hong Kong.

They gambled everything to escape Vietnam. Hung became estranged from his parents and friends. For many who stayed behind and lived through the hyper-inflation and mass unemployment of the 1980s, those who fled were little better than rats jumping ship.

"Our neighbors were kind for the first few days," Hien said of their return. "But they don't want to get too involved."

Tuan, who has worked with returning boat people for years, said the government officially welcomes returnees and tries to discourage discrimination. But it can't enforce social norms, he added.

Given a choice, employers aren't going to hire people who fled, he said.

In a spartan reception room overseen by a bust of the late communist leader Ho Chi Minh, Hien visited Tuan to seek his guidance through the bureaucratic maze. She was clearly wasting her time. Tuan gave a sympathetic chuckle and shrugged off Hien's request for help without a word.

For 42-year-old Hung, homeless and penniless, the one consolation is his mother's forgiveness.

"I was angry when they left," said Dang Thi Than, 66. "But you can't stay mad at your own children. They need help now."

(AP)

Can Lee Lead Taiwan Out of Political Crisis?

TAIPEI — Public anger sparked by the murder of the teenage daughter of a popular TV actress has created an unexpected political crisis for Taiwanese President Lee Teng-Hui.

LEE

Barely a year after becoming the first democratically elected head of state in the Chinese world, Lee has ordered premier Lien Chan to reshuffle his cabinet in a bid to defuse widespread anger over rising crime.

On Tuesday the ruling Kuomintang, which holds a wafer-thin four-seat majority in the 164 seat parliament, faces its second confidence vote in less than a week.

Last week Lee rejected an offer from Lien to resign, made after 50,000 protesters took to the streets of Taipei on May 4 demanding the premier's departure, to take responsibility for the situation.

The march was prompted by the kidnap and killing last month of Pai Hsiao-Yen, the 17-year-old daughter of popular Taiwanese TV star Pai Ping-Ping. The brutal killing of the teenager has shocked the entire island.

"We speak from the bottom of our hearts. We cannot stand it any more," said demonstrator Lai Feng-Wen, who works for the Formosa Plastics Corp., and joined the 50,000-strong march together with his wife and two children.

On Friday opposition parties failed to pass a no-confidence motion. They are unhappy that the premier has stayed on after Lee refused to accept his resignation.

The opposition further claims that under Taiwan's constitution Lien cannot hold both the posts of premier and vice-president at the same time, as he does at present.

The 130 civic groups who demonstrated in Taipei on May 4 have vowed to take to the streets again on May 18 and hold a sit-in outside the presidential office on May 24 if their demand for Lien's departure is not met.

Opinion polls have shown the government's popoularity plummeting since the kidnapping.

Lien's approval rating plunged to only 30 percent after the kidnap victim's mutilated body was found. Half of the 865 respondents to the poll in the mass-circulation *United Daily News* said he should resign.

Lee's approval rating was 48 percent, compared with a peak of 89 percent when he was sworn in for his first six-year term in May 1990.

The unexpected political crisis is among the toughest Lee has faced since he took over in 1988 on the death of President Chiang Ching-Kuo.

In Taiwan's first public presidential and vice-presidential race last year Lee and Lien beat the other candidates, amid a series of Chinese military drills and exercises in waters near the island clearly intended to intimidate voters.

China has warned Lee and other Taiwan politicians not to pursue formal independence for the island, and has vowed to attack should it ever declare itself independent.

Lee has been slow to react to calls for a changes in the government.

However, three ministers have already tendered their resignations. Interior Minister Lin Feng-Cheng, responsible for law and order, tendered his last Thursday, saying he hoped his departure would relieve some of the pressure on his cabinet colleagues.

Tjiu Mau-Ying, chairman of the Council of Agriculture, also tendered his resignation verbally the same day. Chiu has been under pressure to resign since March when an outbreak of foot and mouth disease on the island led to the slaughter of more than three million pigs. *(AFP)*

Grandmother Swallows Stolen Gold to Avoid Arrest

HONG KONG — A drug addict grandmother swallowed a gold necklace she had stolen from a jewellery store here in a failed bid to avoid arrest.

The 43 year-old widow snatched the necklace from a store in Mongkok district and fled with a shop assistant in pursuit.

She swallowed the necklace immediately before being apprehended by the staff member, then pleaded with him to let her go as she was trying to raise money to buy milk for her 18-month-old granddaughter. *(AFP)*

Mafioso on Run Sets Cat as Condition for Return

CALTANISETTA, Sicily — A suspected Mafioso sentenced to eight years in jail and on the run for three has offered to turn himself in — as long as his cat can come too.

Claudio Camastra, a lawyer for 36-year-old suspected mob member Mario Milano, told news agency ANSA that police officials from Sicily were already in contact with his client to discuss his return from hiding in Canada.

Camastra said that apart from not wanting to be separated from his Persian cat Minu, Milano also wanted to be able to talk to his family as soon as he returned home. *(Reuter)*

Queen's Speech Sets Out Tony Blair's "One Nation" Ideal



LONDON — Prime Minister Tony Blair put his mark on Britain yesterday with a program of broad legislative reform in the first queen's speech to Parliament written by a Labour leader in 18 years.

Queen Elizabeth II's ritual speech, steeped in the pomp and ceremony of Medieval times, outlined government bills targeting education and crime, health care and gun control, human rights and youth unemployment.

Blair, who wrote the speech read by the queen, said in it, "my government intends to govern for the benefit of the whole nation."

The speech contained 22 specific measures for the ensuing 17-month legislative calendar, plus four optional bills if time allows, and three "white papers," or studies. Those include one on a U.S.-style freedom of information law, and one on a ban on all tobacco advertising.

True to his campaign promise, Blair said in the speech: "The education of young people will be my government's first priority...to raise standards in schools, colleges and universities, and to promote lifelong learning at the workplace."

His program contained two school bills to cut class sizes, tighten teaching standards and phase out preferential subsidies for some private schools. *(AFP)*

Mandela and Mobutu Await Kabila

POINTE NOIRE, Congo — Confusion over the whereabouts of rebel leader Laurent Kabila delayed Zaire's peace talks yesterday, a senior mediator said on the South African ice-breaker that was scheduled to host the meeting.

A rebel spokesman told Reuters by telephone that Kabila, whose forces have been advancing on Zaire's capital Kinshasa, was insisting on joining the ship only after it was in international waters.

South Africa's Nelson Mandela, who is trying to broker a transitional agreement and avert a rebel attack on Kinshasa, and Zaire's embattled President, Mobutu Sese Seko, waited on shore in Congo's main port of Pointe Noire where the craft was docked. *(Reuter)*

British Parliament Blocks Sinn Fein Office Plans

LONDON — Two leading members of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, were barred yesterday from opening a representative office in Britain's Parliament, to which they were elected on May 1.

House of Commons speaker Betty Boothroyd ruled that Gerry Adams, leader of the hardline Irish Nationalist Party, and chief negotiator Martin McGuinness could only use the facilities of Parliament if they were prepared to be sworn in as members.

Adams and McGuinness, following party policy, have refused to take the oath of loyalty to Queen Elizabeth because that would recognize Britain's right to rule Northern Ireland.

But the two planned to use a loophole under parliamentary rules which allowed them to open an office and hold a parliamentary security pass.

Boothroyd told MPs this loophole would be closed.

"Those who choose not to take their seats should not have access to the many benefits and facilities now available in this house without also taking up their responsibilities as members,"

She gave Adams and McGuinness a week to change their minds and follow the other 656 MPs in swearing an oath on the bible, required under an 1868 act if a member was to take his or her seat. *(Reuter)*

Albanians to Vote June 29

KAVAJE, Albania — Albania, rocked by a popular insurgency, will vote on June 29 for a new Parliament, President Sali Berisha confirmed yesterday.

Berisha officially announced the date in Kavje, 70 kilometers (45 miles) southwest of Tirana, where he inaugurated a memorial to the "victory of democracy" in 1992 in once-communist Albania.

The elections will be "the biggest victory for democracy in Albania," said the president, adding that he was to sign a decree on Wednesday to dissolve Parliament and call elections. *(AFP)*

Sri Lankan Troops Seize Tamil Rebel Town

COLOMBO — Sri Lankan troops yesterday captured a Tamil separatist stronghold as they pursued a massive offensive aimed at seizing a strategic highway, leaving 19 people dead, military sources said.

Thousands of heavily-armed soldiers took the small town of Omanthai in the island's north after Tamil guerrillas who had been massing in the region for weeks withdrew, military and Tamil sources said.

Omanthai, which lies north of Vavuniya town, had been controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) since 1990. The military said troops found Omanthai deserted.

Tamil residents and officials in Vavuniya, 254 kilometers (158 miles) north of Colombo, said the army was raining long-range mortars and shells on rebel areas from the town. *(AFP)*



BEIJING, China (May 13): Policemen block the western entrance to the Forbidden City across from Zhong Shan Park in Beijing after an explosion jolted the park. According to some local residents the blast was caused by a person rigged with explosive with the aim to commit suicide. *(AFP PHOTO)*

Okinawa Still Apart From Rest of Japan, Governor Says

TOKYO — Okinawan Governor Masahide Ota said yesterday the 25 years since the return of the country's southern islands to Japan had not narrowed the "psychological distance" between them and the rest of the country.

Ota made the remarks in the Okinawan capital of Naha on the eve of the 25th anniversary of Okinawa's return to Japan, after 27 years of post-war rule by the U.S. military.

"As you know, we are not in a state to celebrate the anniversary," Jiji Press quoted Ota as telling a news conference, referring to disputes with the central government over the still huge U.S. military presence on the island prefecture.

In particular, the recent legislation that allows U.S. forces to continue occupying Okinawan land even after leases with local land owners expire, showed that the "psychological distance has not been narrowed," he reportedly said.

The sub-tropical islands on the east China Sea, which make up only 0.6 percent of the whole Japanese territory, are home for some 27,000 of 47,000 U.S. troops in Japan, as well as three quarters of U.S. military facilities in the country. *(AFP)*

China Hands Hijack Suspect Over to Taiwan

TAIPEI — Taiwan authorities sailed directly to mainland China yesterday and took custody of an accused hijacker who faces trial on the island, completing a rare cooperative exchange with its communist arch rival.

Taiwan representatives rode a fishing boat from the Taipei-held islet of Quemoy (Jinmen) to nearby Xiamen to fetch Liu Shan-Chung.

Liu — who doused himself with petrol aboard a Taiwan passenger jet on March 10 and threatened to set himself ablaze if it did not fly to China — had sought political asylum there, saying he had been persecuted in nationalist-ruled Taiwan.

Beijing's communist government said no. *(Reuter)*

Vietnam Sentences Eight to Death in Drugs Trial

HANOI — A court in the Vietnamese capital sentenced eight people to death yesterday, and imposed a range of jail terms on others at the end of the Communist country's biggest drugs trial, a government official said.

Among those found guilty of involvement in a trafficking ring, which is said to have flooded Vietnam with several hundred kilos of heroin, were 11 police and border guard officials.

Police and border guards were part of the eight sentenced to death.

A Foreign Ministry official told Reuters the sentencing reflected the government's determination to deal strictly with a growing scourge of drugs flowing into and through Vietnam from Asia's narcotics-producing golden triangle region. *(Reuter)*



OKINAWA, Japan (May 13): Anti-U.S. base demonstrators raise their fists to demand the withdrawal of U.S. bases from Okinawa at a main gate of the U.S. Marine Corp's Camp Hansen, in Okinawa, as part of a three-day peace march. Over 500 protesters, one of three groups, staged a peace march ahead of the 25th anniversary this week of the end of post-war U.S. rule on the southern island. Five thousand people, including 1,200 from other parts of Japan, were expected to join the march. *(AFP PHOTO)*

هكذا من الأصل

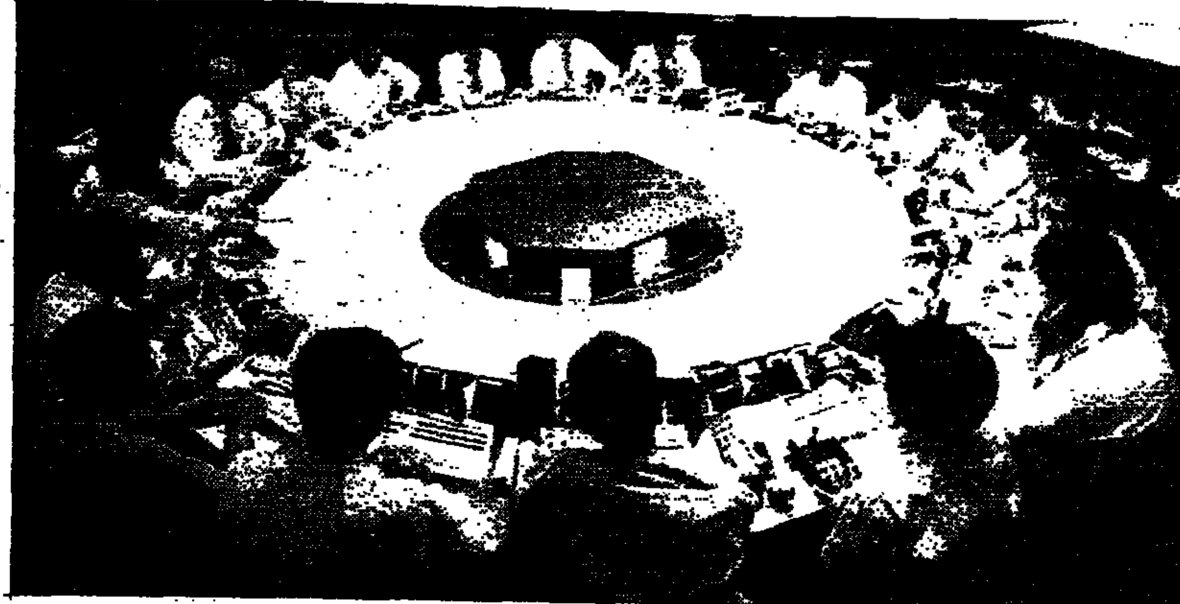
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Zaire Imposes Night Curfew in Kinshasa

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age Siege

Dollar Bounces Back, Stocks Advance Moderatel



TOKYO, Japan (May 12): Figures of a board flash 118.20 yen against the U.S. dollar during the morning session at a foreign money brokerage in Tokyo. The dollar was off lows against the yen in the morning in Tokyo on soothing comments by Japanese Finance Minister Hiroshi Mitsuzuka, after dropping to 117.50 earlier in Sydney. (AFP PHOTO)

TOKYO — The U.S. dollar bounced back against the yen by midday Tuesday on comments by the Japanese finance minister that the dollar had fallen enough. Tokyo stocks advanced moderately.

The dollar was changing hands at 119.45 yen at late morning, up 0.51 yen from late Monday in Tokyo and also above its late New York trading of 119.30 yen overnight.

On Monday, the dollar fell as low as 117.50 yen in Tokyo, the lowest since Jan. 22, falling nearly 9 yen for the past week. It later rebounded slightly by supportive comments by senior Japanese officials.

Finance Minister Hiroshi Mitsuzuka said Tuesday that the foreign-exchange market was gradually matching the objectives set by the Group of Seven industrialized nations last month.

At a meeting in Washington, finance ministers from the G-7 — the United States, Japan, Britain, France, Canada, Italy and Germany - hinted they would intervene to stem the dollar's further advance.

Although Mitsuzuka later retracted his remark, he initially said he was content with the market's reaction to the G-7 message.

"It's getting there," Mitsuzuka told reporters.

He later added he was "not going to say if I'm content or not, or if it is enough or not enough."

In a separate news conference, Japan's Trade Minister Shinji Sato said it was too early to judge what impact the rise and fall of the dollar may have on trade.

A higher yen makes Japanese exports more expensive abroad while making exports cheaper.

U.S. officials have warned against renewed rises in Japan's trade surplus. In the past, American officials have favored a stronger yen as a way of reducing Japan's trade surplus.

In morning stock trading, share prices rose on arbitrage-linked buying.

The 225-issue nikkei stock average rose 142.02 points, or 0.71 percent, to 20,285.53 points at the end of the morning session. On Monday, the average rose 340.73 points, or 1.72 percent.

The Tokyo stock price index of all issues listed on the first section was up 14.88 points, or 0.99 percent, to 1,508.33. The topix closed up 15.41 points, or 1.04 percent Monday.

The solid performance on Wall Street as well as a rise in nikkei futures prices on the Chicago mercantile exchange boosted Tokyo shares, traders said.

The Dow Jones industrial average gained 123.22 points to close Monday at 7,292.75, above last Tuesday's record close at 7,225.32.

The Benchmark No. 182 10-year Japanese government bond was quoted at 102.95 yen, up from Monday's 102.81-yen close. Its yield, which moves in the opposite direction, was at 2.570 percent, down from 2.590 percent. (AP)

Renewed U.S. Interest Breathes New Life into Pan-American Free Trade

BELO HORIZONTE, Brazil — U.S. President Bill Clinton's Latin American trip last week breathed new life into plans to create a Pan-American megamarket, but the 34 countries involved are a long way from agreeing how to go about it.

The renewed U.S. trade offensive in the region came ahead of a crucial meeting in this industrial town this week, where the structure of the negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) is expected to be set.

Nearly three years ago at a meeting in Miami, the leaders of 34 nations — communist Cuba being the only one excluded — enthusiastically embraced the idea of negotiating the hemispheric agreement by 2005.

The idea is to knock down trade barriers from Alaska to Tierra Del Fuego, creating a market of 764 million consumers with an average per capita income of $10,540.

But since the Miami summit, U.S. interest has lagged — largely due to domestic problems — while subregional trade pacts in Latin America have gained strength.

Already more than 53 percent of exports from the Americas stay in the hemisphere, thanks in large part to those trading blocs, according to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

Europe and Asia have started to move in on what Washington has historically considered its "backyard."

But U.S. Commerce Secretary William Daley — due here later this week — set out on a Latin American tour Saturday to "send a clear message" to Europe and Asia that Washington would not leave them an open field in the region.

In the past year, trade missions from Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Japan and South Korea have visited Argentina, Brazil and Chile — South America's most economically dynamic countries.

The European Union is talking about free trade with the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), grouping Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

The EU already is the MERCOSUR's biggest trading partner and its main source of direct foreign investment.

"European interest is the fire under the can of the U.S. to start getting more active," Thomas o'Keefe, head of the Washington-based MERCOSUR Consulting Group told AFP.

While O'Keefe said he thought EU-MERCOSUR free trade was still a pipedream, "It does serve to underscore that Latin America does have other options."

MERCOSUR — and especially Brazil — has been vocal in its criticism of the apparent U.S. indifference, while at the same time raising its profile as a candidate to lead the FTAA process.

At this week's meeting Brazil will propose a three-stage negotiation process that would not touch the main issue of tariff reductions until 2003, just two years before the FTAA deadline.

The Brazilian position "casts some doubts as to how serious Brazil is about keeping with this deadline," O'Keefe said.

The United States, on the other hand, is pressing for full negotiations to begin next year and Clinton gained support for the U.S. position on his tour last week among the small but numerous Central American and Caribbean states.

With Brazil and the United States facing off, the minister's meeting is expected to be "quite contentious," O'Keefe said.

Reaching agreement on the FTAA will be quite an undertaking, given the hemisphere's wide economic and social disparities.

The United States alone accounted for 76 percent of the hemisphere's gross domestic product last year. Canada and Brazil tied for a distant second with seven percent each, while Mexico's GDP accounted for four percent and Argentina three percent. (AFP)

Mobutu's Wealth Was $4 Billion in 1980s

LONDON — Zairean leader Mobutu Sese Seko amassed a fortune which attained $4 billion in the mid 1980s and was mainly derived from "looted aid", the Financial Times daily said.

"Much of the fortune has been spent as the ailing dictator has attempted to prop up his regime," the paper said.

The FT listed at least 20 properties owned by Mobutu or by members of his entourage which it said were worth a total of £23 million ($36 million).

The paper said it had been told by officials of the U.S. Treasury and the International Monetary Fund that Mobutu's fortune in the middle of the 1980s had been estimated at $4 billion. (AFP)

Lebanon Industry Seeks Government Support

BEIRUT — Lebanese industrialists are seeking radical new government policies to boost productivity and alter Lebanon's traditional image as a service-oriented economy.

The industrial sector, despite recent growth, is operating at only about 30% of total capacity, according to the head of the Lebanese Industrialist Union, Jack Sarraf.

Lebanon is a satellite. We occupy an important geopolitical spot, making lebanon a satellite for at least 80 million consumers in the region, he said.

We need developed industry which can be an engine for growth.

Industrialists say only a comprehensive policy able to assess the comparative advantages of different sectors will boost productivity.

Despite the fact that in two years we have doubled our export figures, we are still far from our return on investment, Sarraf said.

Growth, But Not Enough

The sector employs more than 200,000, about 12% of the country's total labor force. It expanded in 1996 with the establishment of 459 new factories, bringing the total to 7,520.

Imports of industrial machinery rose 6.7% in 1996 to 314 million and bank credit to industry rose by 25% to comprise 13% of total bank credit.

Industrial exports increased by 9.9%. Textiles, paper, jewels, mechanical appliances and vegetable products were at the top of the list of Lebanon's 1996 exports worth a total of 1,018 million, which had increased from 1995's 824 million.

Industrialists said that high costs of production stemmed from high land prices in the absence of industrial zoning, high energy bills and high transport costs from factory to port.

Agro-industrialists, running an 800 million business, blame the recent fall in their exports on inflated costs and the government's erratic decisions.

Risks for Food Exports

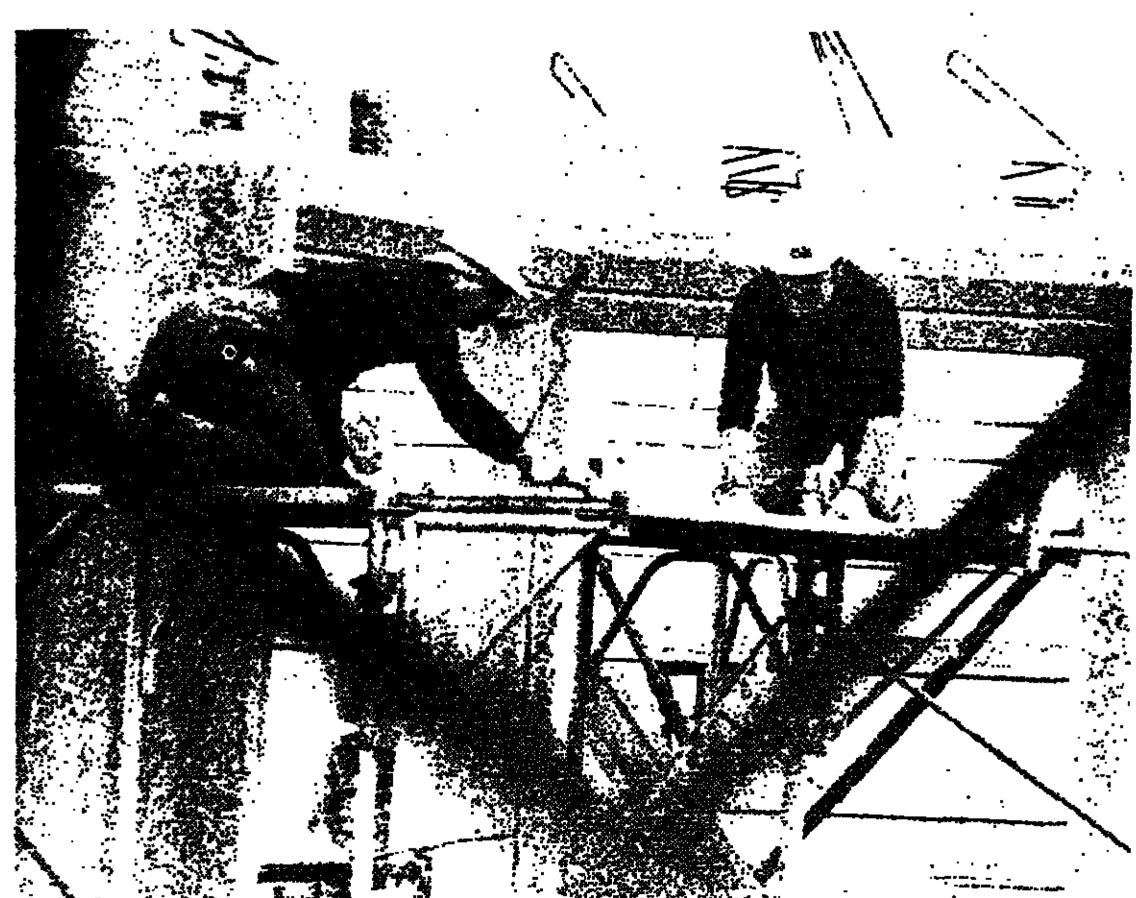
Food exports fell to 200 million in 1996 from an annual 260 million before 1990, the head of the Agro-Industrialists Union Atef Idriss told Reuters.

Idriss said the government has been allocating 60 million annually to subsidize the tobacco and sugar beet industry turning agriculture into a virtual monoculture and causing a hyperinflation in the agricultural sector.

Unfortunately lebanese policy makers have not been able to translate their support to the agro-industrial sector. They were unable to establish a long term growth-inducing environment.

Instead erratic decisions are crippling our foods industry, he added.

The government has decided to halt from October 1 the import of agricultural products that can be home-grown in an attempt to boost productivity and activate the agro-industry.



First Steps to Growth

Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri said the decision was the first step in a plan aimed at stimulating growth and activating the economy. He said the government was preparing a plan to encourage foreign investment.

However, in the current absence of a comprehensive government policy, smaller industries have been forced to take tough measures to protect their business.

In order to re-engineer our situation, we decided to temporarily shut one of our two kilns, Bernard Bridi, marketing consultant at Uniceramic told Reuters.

Uniceramic, the Middle East's biggest ceramic floor tiles manufacturer and Lebanon's only tile manufacturer, broke even in 1996 with export sales worth 6 million and local sales at 8 million.

The government should increase custom duties on imported tiles for a maximum period of two to three years and initiate a serious body to control quality of imported goods Bridi said.

The imported tiles are currently selling at our prices or lower prices while we are providing higher quality, he added.

Need for Breathing Space

Sarraf said Lebanon's civil war created a negative investment environment. Industrialists have some support from the government, but not enough.

At least, let's fix a date until the year 2,000. Let's be safe until then. We should not forget the 17 years of war. There is no other way to develop, Sarraf said.

He said Lebanon's trade agreements with Arab countries like Syria and Egypt dated back to 1953. The latest trade agreement with Saudi Arabia was signed in 1970.

However, Sarraf said plans for an industrial park, the reduction of custom duties on some imported raw material, and the government's decision to pay 5% out of the 12% interest on industrial loans were signs of a changing attitude.

Figures for real gross domestic product are not available, so an accurate assessment of industry's contribution is not available.

Industrialists believe the government has traditionally undermined the potential of the industrial sector and disregarded it as a serious contibutor for real economic growth.

Traders have been more successful than industrialists in voicing their concerns and being listened to by the government, Bridi said. (Reuter)





By: Ayatollah Murtada Mutahhari

Part 6

Jihad is the impenetrable armor of God. A Muslim community equipped with the spirit of *jihad* is not vulnerable to enemy assaults. *Jihad* is the reliable shield of God. The armor is the defensive covering worn during fighting, but the shield is a tool taken in hand to foil the enemy's strokes and thrusts. A shield is meant to prevent a blow, and armor is meant to neutralize its effect. Apparently, Imam Ali (AS) has compared jihad both to armor and to a shield because some forms of it have a preventive nature and prevent the onslaught of the enemy, while other forms of jihad have a resistive nature and render enemy attacks ineffective.

God will clothe with a garment of humiliation a person who refrains from *jihad* because he dislikes it. The people who lose the spirit of fighting and resisting the forces of evil are doomed to humiliation, disgrace, bad-luck and helplessness. The noble Prophet has said, "All good lies in the sword and under the shadow of the sword." He has also said, "God has honored my followers because of the hoofs of their horses and the position of their arrows." This means that the Muslim community is a community of power and force. Islam is a religion of power. It produces *mujahidin*. Will Durant, in his book, *The Story of Civilization*, says that no religion has called its followers to power to the extent that Islam has. According to another *hadith*, the noble Prophet has been quoted as having said, "He who did not fight and did not even think of fighting will die the death of a sort of hypocrite." *Jihad*, or at least a desire to take part in it, is an integral part of the doctrine of Islam. One's fidelity to Islam is judged by it. Another *hadith* reports the Prophet as having said that a *shahid* would not be interrogated in his grave. The Prophet said that the flash of the sword over his head was enough of test. The fidelity of a *shahid*, having once been proved, need not be questioned further.

In the early days of Islam, many Muslims had a special spirit, which may be called the spirit of longing for *shahadat*. Imam Ali (AS) was the most prominent of such people. He himself says, "When the *ayah* was revealed : 'Do men think that they will be let off, because they say, We believe, and will not be tested with affliction?' (29:2), I asked the Prophet about it. I knew that as long as he was alive the Muslims would not be subject to an ordeal. The Prophet said that after him, a civil strife would break out among the Muslims. Then reminded him that on the occasion of the battle of Uhud, when I was dejected because of number of Muslims had been killed and I had been deprived of *shahadat*, he consoled me, saying that I would attain *shahadat* in the future. The Prophet affirmed it, and asked me whether I would observe patience at that time. I said that it would be an occasion for being thankful to God, not for merely being patient. Then the Prophet gave me some details of the events of come. This is what we mean by the longing for *shahadat*.

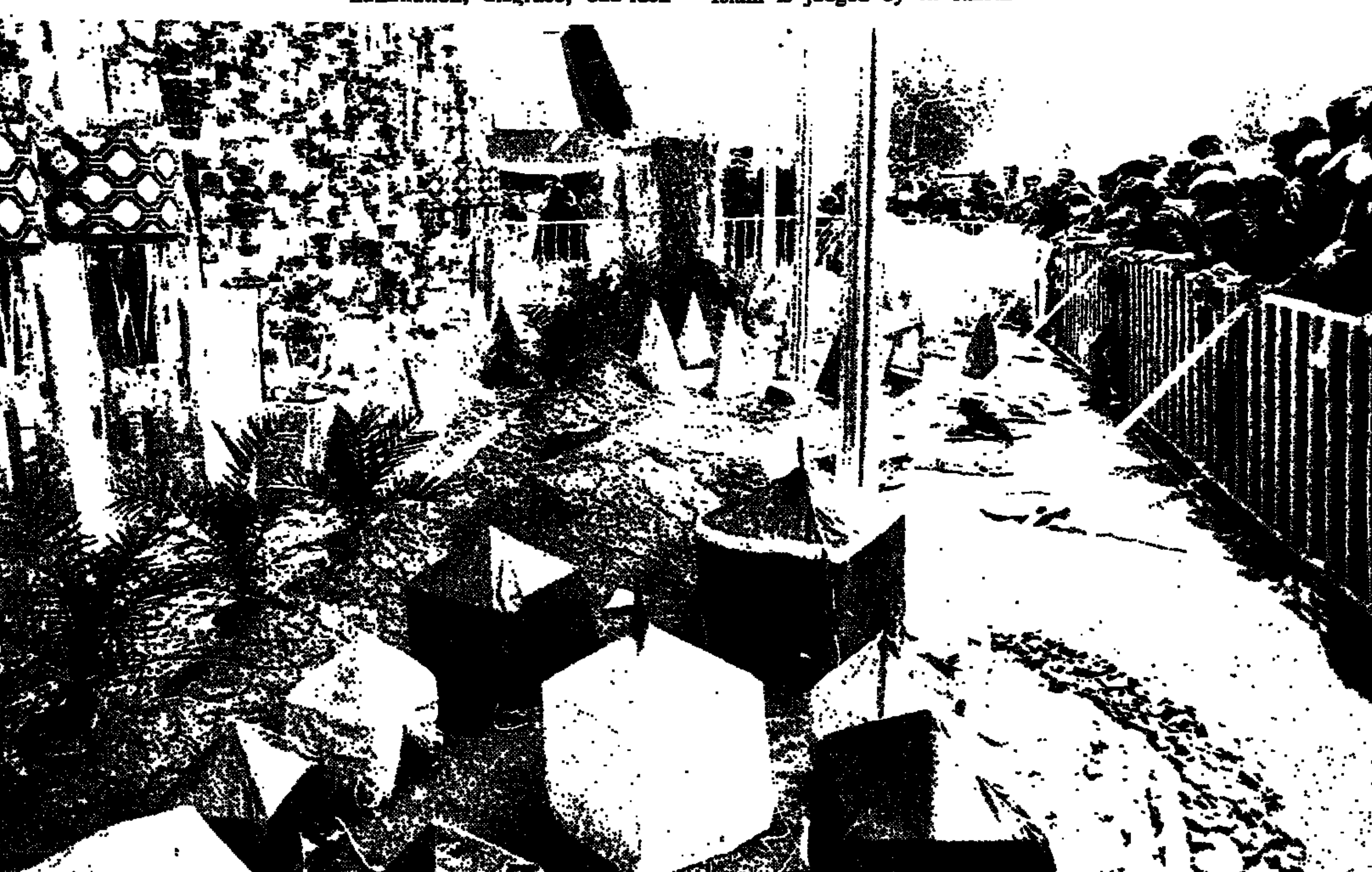
(To be Contd.)



إنَّ النَّاسَ عَبيدُ الدُّنيا والدِّينُ لَعقٌ على ألسِنَتِهِم

"People have become slaves of wordly things and religion has become a matter to be licked over their lips."

Imam Hussein (AS)



THE ASHURA UPRISING



Hazrat Imam Hussein (AS) rose against Yazid and perhaps he was sure he could not overthrow the monarchy of Yazid, it is narrated that the Imam (AS) was aware of this and yet, he rose knowing he had to fight a despotic, cruel regime even if he has to give his life. So, he did rise, sacrifice lives, killed a good many and was slain himself.

Before Karbala

The Expansion of the Islamic World

Before the time of the Prophet (S), the land of Arabia had been divided into clans and tribes which were often at odds with each other, with inter-tribal feuds sometimes lasting for generations. But the Prophet (S) ordered an end to these feuds, and, united by Islam and gave fresh vigor by the true faith, the forces of Islam burst out of Arabia, sweeping the armies of the Byzantine and Sassanid empires before them. Very many reasons have been given for the suddenness of these conquests — economical, social, cultural as well as religious — but that does not concern us here. What is important is the incredible speed with which the Islamic world expanded.

After the Holy Prophet (S) passed away in 11 AH (632 AD), many tribes of the Arabian Peninsula renounced their allegiance to Islam; thus, for a period of about one and a half years, up till the later part of 633 AD, Islamic forces were occupied in the suppression of the Arab Apostasy (i.e. renunciation of the faith). Once this had been accomplished, Islamic forces moved against the Byzantine empire; after a series of skirmishes, a decisive battle, fought in 636 AD at Yarmouk (in Palestine today), resulted in a decisive victory for the Islamic forces. Syria and Palestine feel under Muslim control, with Egypt and North Africa soon to follow. On the Sassanid front, the decisive battle was fought at Qadisiya (on the banks of the Euphrates in modern-day Iraq) in 637 AD. This was rapidly followed by the capture of the Sassanid capital (Medain) a year later, and the second decisive battle at Nehawand (in Iran today) in 642 AD, which resulted in an almost complete collapse of the Sassanid empire.

Thus, within the space of less than ten years, Islamic forces found themselves in control of a vast territory with millions of inhabitants. Contrary to what some non-Muslim historians were to assert later, these conquests never involved forcing people to convert to Islam; in fact, many parts of the Islamic world still had a majority of non-Muslims even in 750 AD. Moreover, these conquests were carried out by a force disciplined by Islam; therefore, no civilians were attacked, and in many cases, the civilian population actually benefited from the change of government. Thus, for example, the Syrian population was divided into two Christian sects — a majority of Nestorians (a sect now extinct) ruled and persecuted by a minority of Catholics; to the Muslims, however, both sects were Christians, and therefore, People of the Book, to be treated fairly and without any persecution. Likewise, the peasantry of the old Sassanid empire, though it now had to pay *jaziya*, found itself relieved of the persecution of the feudal Sassanid overlords.

False Acceptance

Rather, and this is very ironical, it was the Muslims who were threatened by these worldly victories — though many did not realize it immediately. After the fall of Mecca to the troops of the Prophet (S), in 630 AD, there were many who had nominally accepted Islam, because everyone else around them had; but their acceptance had never been genuine. Now, within the space of a few years, these people realized that Islam could be used to acquire worldly, materialistic, political power and wealth — in other words, the Islamic world could be turned into an Arab empire, or an empire of a particular clan or tribe, such as the Bani Umayya or Bani Abbas.

A lot of the key events that lead up to (and including) Karbala have to be interpreted and understood in this light — as conflicts between those who wanted to retain the concept of a theocratic Islamic world with all Muslims equal, and those who wanted to create an empire with a few amassing wealth and living in luxury.

Siffin and the Kharijite Revolt

Things came to a head in 35 AH (656 AD); a mob from Kufa, Basra and Egypt, disenchanted by the economic disequilibrium within the Islamic world, marched upon Medina, blaming Uthman. Members of the tribe of Quraish did take measures to prevent things from getting out of hand; for example, Hazrat Ali (AS) sent Hazrat Hassan (AS) and Hazrat Hussein (AS) to guard the caliph's house. But the mob, incited by a few unruly elements, got out of control and in the ensuing scuffle, the third caliph was murdered.

Worldly Desires

Now the people of Medina, shocked by what had happened, looked to Hazrat Ali (AS), pressing him to accept the caliphate. *(To be Contd.)*

IMAM HUSSEIN IBN ALI (AS)

Part 6

The Qoranic exegesists and scholars say that this noble verse was revealed when the Christians of the city of Najran agreed with the Messenger of Allah (S) to pray to Allah to destroy the party which stuck to falsehood. As agreed, and on time, the Holy Prophet (S) went out to the place chosen for the contest. He carried Imam Hussein (AS) and took Imam Hassan (AS) by the hand. Fatimah followed behind while Imam Ali walked in their wake. "Say 'Amen' at the end of my prayer," the Holy Prophet (S) told them. But, upon seeing those brilliant faces filled with piety and grandeur, the Christians stopped short of entering the contest. They recognized the Prophet's authority, and paid the tribute.

The noble verse called Hassan and Hussein "our sons," mentioned the Prophet Muhammad (S), and referred to Ali as "ourselves" and Fatimah as "our women." She symbolizes the whole of womankind in this verse. Had there been other people who had higher status than these people, the Holy Prophet (S) certainly would have brought them along with him.

3. Verse of Affection (Mawada):

"... say: 'I do not ask you for any payment for my preaching to you, except the love for my relatives...'" Holy Qoran (42:23)

The Qoranic exegesists state that this verse was revealed concerning Ali, Fatimah, Hassan and Hussein (AS).

Jabir bin Abdullah is reported to have said: "A bedouin came to the Holy Prophet (S) and said, 'O Muhammad! introduce me to Islam.

"'You should bear witness,' replied the Messenger of Allah (S) 'that there is no god but Allah, Who is the only God, Who has no partner whatsoever, and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger.'

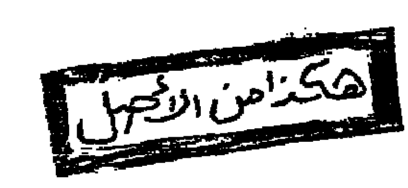
"'Do you ask for recompense in return?' asked the bedouin. "'No,' said the Prophet (S), 'except that you should love the relatives.'

"'Mine or yours?' inquired the man.

"'Mine,' said the Holy Prophet (S).

"'Hold out your hand,' said the bedouin. 'I give you my pledge of allegiance. My Allah curse whoever doesn't love you or your kindred.'

"'Amen,' said the Messenger of Allah (S)." (To be Contd.)



هكذا من الأصل





Study: Pacemakers Can Help Frequent Fainters

NEW ORLEANS — Pacemakers do more than help the faint of heart - they also can revive those who faint suddenly and often, researchers announced.

The devices that stabilize heartbeats are not for everyone with fainting disorders, but a Canadian study of 46 frequent fainters found they cured an overwhelming majority, said lead researcher Dr. Stuart J. Connolly.

"The responses in most patients were really dramatic," he said. "We're not talking about small differences — we're talking about patients who were really fainting a lot."

Connolly, a cardiologist and health science professor at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, announced his findings at the North American Society of Pacing and Electrophysiology meeting in New Orleans. The study was paid for by Medtronic Inc., a Minneapolis pacemaker manufacturer.

People generally faint when their heart rates or blood pressure drop suddenly. Doctors have been divided on whether to implant pacemakers as a treatment, because the devices can't raise blood pressure and because many patients are relatively young.

But Connolly said his two-year study ended three months early and a follow-up study was canceled because it was obvious that pacemakers helped the fainters.

Pacemakers were implanted in 24 patients with the fainting disorders, while 22 patients went without the pacemakers, Connolly said. Thirteen of the 22 patients without the devices - about 59 percent - still suffered fainting spells, while only 4 of the 24 patients with pacemakers - about 16 percent - kept fainting, he said.

The pacemakers were set to begin pumping at 110 beats a minute - faster than normal - for two minutes after the heart rate dropped off suddenly.

Dr. Douglas Zipes, head of cardiology at Indiana University Medical School, called the research into syncope, or fainting, important and very encouraging.

"Syncope is a bear. Evaluating patients with syncope and making an appropriate diagnosis and then directing therapy can be a major challenge," he said.

At least seven of the 13 patients who fainted without pacemakers had them implanted afterward, Connolly said. Three of those were Connolly's personal patients.

(AP)

Ripley's Believe It or Not!®

THADDEUS STEVENS, A CIVIL WAR CONGRESSIONAL LEADER from Pennsylvania, WAS ELECTED TO PUBLIC OFFICE TWO MONTHS AFTER HE DIED!

Believe It or Not! MOTHER LLAMAS BEGIN TO HUM SEVERAL WEEKS BEFORE THEIR BABIES ARE BORN AND CONTINUE HUMMING THROUGH THEIR OFFSPRING'S INFANCY!

HMMMMM...

Georgia Chaffin and Tammy Adams of Cullman, Ala., SPENT 736 HOURS OVER 30 CONSECUTIVE DAYS RIDING ON A SEESAW! (1975)

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CAN YOU DIE OF CYANIDE POISONING IF YOU SWALLOW AN APRICOT PIT?

APRICOT PITS MAY RELEASE MINUTE AMOUNTS OF CYANIDE, BUT IT WOULD TAKE OVER 50 APRICOT PITS TO POISON YOU.

Health Capsules is not intended to be of a diagnostic nature.

THOUGHT

Whatever you want to do, do it now. There are only so many tomorrows.

Michael Landon

PRAYER

Noon..........................13:01
Evening.......................20:23
Dawn (tomorrow)...........04:10
Sunrise (tomorrow).........06:00

TODAY IN HISTORY

1509 - French defeat Venetians at Agnadello and become masters of north Italy--Spanish troops seize Oran from Moors.

1610 - Francois Ravaillac, a fanatic, assassinates France's King Henry IV who is succeeded by Louis VIII, age 9, with Maria de Medici, they queen mother, as regent.

1792 - Sweden's King Charles XII takes Warsaw.

1791 - British under Lord Cornwallis ovethrow Tippoo of Mysore at Seringpatam in India.

1897 - Britain, by treaty with Ethiopia, abandons certain claims in Somaliland but emperor Menelek refuses to surrender claims to land near the Nile.

1921 - Fascists win in Italian elections.

1964 - Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev opens Awan Dam in Egypt.

1975 - United States announces that marines have recaptured by force the U.S. merchant ship Mayaguez which had been seized by Cambodians, and that U.S. planes destroyed three Cambodian naval vessels.

SCRABBLE® BRAND GRAMS

T1	V4	R1	E1	E1	U1	N1	3rd Letter Double	RACK 1
P3	S1	E1	I1	P3	A1	R1		RACK 2
T1	E1	I1	I1	S1	D2	E1		RACK 3
C3	X8	T1	U1	E1	E1	E1	Double Word Score	RACK 4

PAR SCORE 170-180

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL ____
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7- letter word from the letters in each row. To total points of your words, use scoring directions to right of each row. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words can be found in OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). **JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW**

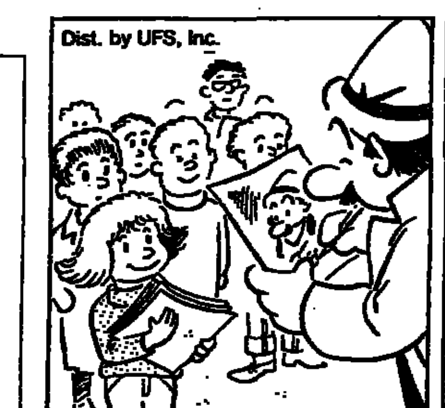
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SCRABBLE BRAND GRAMS SOLUTION BY JUDD

M3	O1	U1	L1	D2	E1	D2	RACK 1 =	64
P3	H4	Y4	S1	I1	C3	S1	RACK 2 =	101
S1	I1	X8	T1	Y4			RACK 3 =	15
G2	R1	U1	M3	B3	L1	E1	RACK 4 =	62

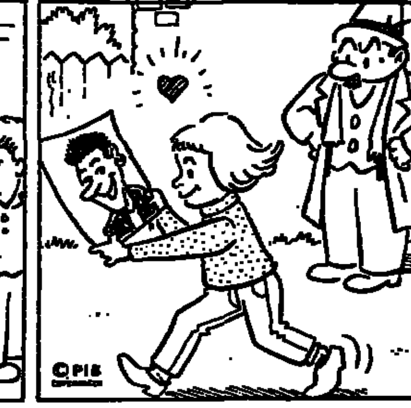
PAR SCORE 155-165 JUDD'S TOTAL 242

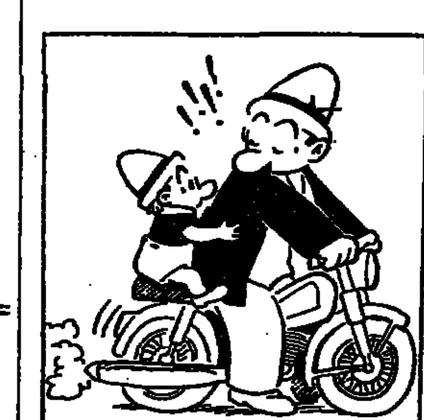
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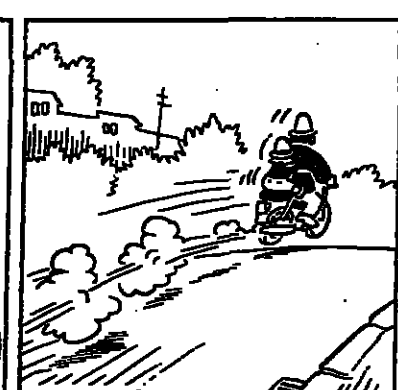




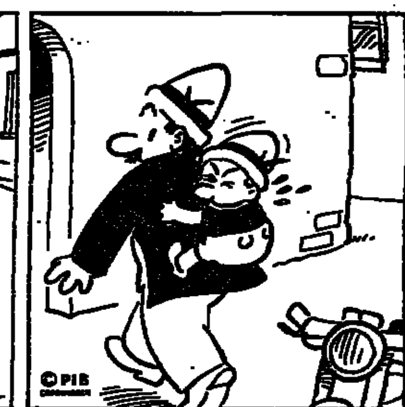


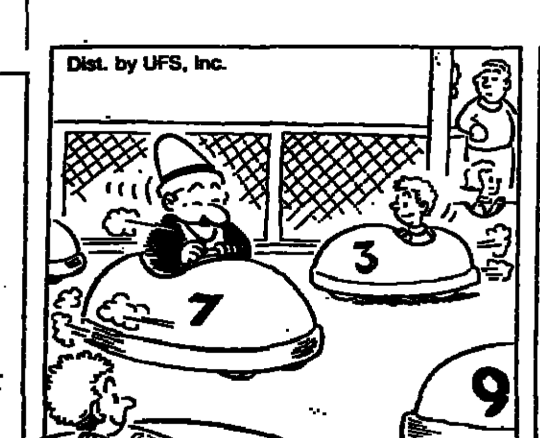


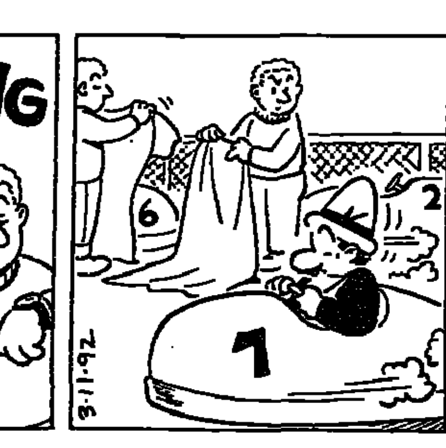














An Exclusive Interview With Nourizadeh, Head of Governor's Office of Firooz Kooh

Gholam Reza Nourizadeh, Firooz Kooh Head of Governor's Office took part in an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times' correspondent to elaborate on historical, cultural, geographical and social characteristics of this ancient city:



According to solid evidences and valid documents creation of Firooz Kooh dates back to the years before the emergence of Islam. The solid historical evidences talk of a polite and cultivated generation lived in Firooz Kooh long long ago. The city's literature is very much interested by Amidi Firooz Koohi, an exalted poet bearing the name of his hometown in his family name.

Pages of history tell the story of the city before Islam:



After the assassination of Kius, governor of ancient Hyrcania in 536 of the Christian era, upon an order from Khosrow Anoushirvan, the Sassanid emperor, Gharbon and Soukhra took the rule in Hyrcania. Gharbon preferred the mountains and settled in Mount Ferim (Firooz Kooh). Today, the remains of various strong castles, towers and strongholds reveal the thousand-year-long history of the region.

The largest castle explored in the region is called Kharabeh Lajavardi (Blue Ruins) Castle in Saranza, Firooz Kooh. The name of this castle has been recorded in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, where the book tells the story of Yazdegird III, the last emperor of Sasanian dynasty, and his withdrawal and assassination in 651 which marked the end of the dynasty. This castle is cited as a stronghold of the emperor:

Fortresses of Gonbadan and Charmaneh

And Lajavardi castle to keep war materials

And in the book of this savant man of Toos, Ferdowsi, the city is introduced as a developed and civilized one. Stone inscriptions hidden deep in the heart of the Mount Elmieh in east Edris railway along with tens of other scripts used in ancient times manifest the old civilization of this city.

On Firooz Kooh, Le Strange quotes Hamdollah Mostoufi as saying: In the fourth century A.D. at the vicinity of Damavand, two cities were located namely Veemeh (Firooz Kooh) and Shalanbeh. His book also says the two cities enjoy rich farms and gardens of grapes. According to the book Damavand is a hamlet called Pasheian and that Firooz Kooh is inhabited by seven tribes and it gives access to the city from four gates.

In his book Abdollah Mostoufi says "Firooz Kooh is one of the strong strongholds of Mazandaran, surrounded and captured by Tamerlane during the Mongolian invasion."

In the two outskirts of Tirband, Turkistan, and the reign of Harirud, lives a tribe namely Firooz Koohi. The historians say, however, that the name is not taken from Firooz Kooh, the medieval capital of Ghoorian dynasty. Rather, it has taken from the fortress of Firooz Kooh located in Iran sandwiched



between Mazandaran and Tehran, Isfahan, and Arak. Tamerlane captured the fortress (Firooz Kooh) in 1404 and sent the captives to Harat.

What is noteworthy here is the fact that in spite of the Mongolian invasion and the severe damages as well as the natural erosion by the wind, rain and snow, some fortresses and strongholds stand still to this day, high atop the mountain to remind the ancient history of the region.

Firooz Kooh is located some 125 km northeast of Tehran, sandwiched among Garmsar from the south, Semnan Province from the east, Mazandaran from northwest, and Damavand from the southwest.

According to the administrative divisions of the country, Firooz Kooh covers some 3000 square kilometers land area. It is one of the largest regions of Tehran Province and includes 98 villages and hamlets. Some villages are almost 80 km away from central Firooz Kooh. The city is administered by 45 state departments, organizations and offices.

Firooz Kooh Municipality was founded in 1316 (1927) at the same time with the establishment of Tabriz Municipality.

The police department's organization was created in 1304 (1925) and the judiciary



Interior view of Iran Travis Factory

system in 1317 (1928).

Due to the importance of the region, the Post & Telegraph Co. was inaugurated in 1258 (1880) and the Veterinary Department in 1312 (1923). Also some of the offices in Firooz Kooh are almost 100 years old. Firooz Kooh railway is one of the most important stations in the region and in the national railway route.

Establishment of industrial zone and creation of a considerable number of factories and manufacturing companies in the region such as the first and sole silicon materials producing factory, Alborz Industrial Lime Factory, Elit Seed and Sugar Beet Establishment which enjoys a global fame, the existence of rich mines, Azad University with 4,500 seats, day and boarding schools, all and all are signs of the city's social, economic, and cultural growth.

Before its recognition as a city, Firooz Kooh included four villages namely Qezghanchai, Hablehrud, Shahrabad and Poshtkooh. Following the recognition of Firooz Kooh as a city, it was divided in two Central and Arjomand districts: The first including villages of Shahrabad and Poshtkooh, and the latter covering Qezghanchai and Heblehrud.

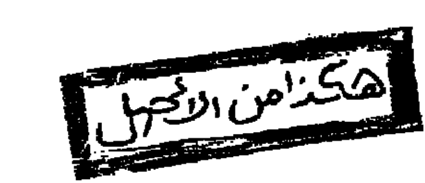
As it was mentioned in historical background of the city, Firooz Kooh has been sometimes under the domination of Hyrcania and it was administered by the governors installed by the local or central governments.

During the Safavid era, Firooz Kooh was the last point in the triangle of Tehran, Isfahan and Arak.

Due to its strategic importance, Firooz Kooh was ruled by different rulers at different times.

During Reza Shah's kingdom in 1310 (1931), according to the administrative divisions, Firooz Kooh became a sub-division of Tehran Province. A few years later, however, it was first recognized as a sub-division of Mazandaran Province (ex-Shahi) and next, until (1357) 1978, as a sub-division of Semnan Province.

(Contd. on Pg 9)



هكذا من الأصل




[illegible]

During Reza Khan's years, 60 villages have been recorded for the city with a population of 12,000 people. The number of villages and population reveal nothing but the civilization and development of Firooz Kooh during the past years.

Communications and Roads

It is recorded in the book of *Mazandaran-Astarabad* that:

"The road that extended from Mazandaran to Tehran, was once Savaad Kooh-Baarforoush Road along the ancient stone-paved road. Both roads were comfortable. The famous stone-paved road was fully implemented in 1031 H. That was the road Shah Abbas ordered Mirza Mohammad Taqi, vizier of Mazandaran, to construct the road from Farahabad near the Caspian Sea, to Khar through Sary-Aliabad and Savaad Kooh-Helirud and Firooz Kooh with a length of 270 kilometers and nine day's journey.

The majority of people in Firooz Kooh are active in agriculture, gardening, and animal farming sectors while some work in industrial sector. The agricultural products are mainly wheat, barley, potatoes, cereal, and fruits like apples, apricots, sour cherries, and a lot of walnuts. Also the region is famous for its beekeeping business and honey.


Firooz Kooh Governor's Office Building

In his visit to Firooz Kooh region, President Hashemi Rafsanjani amidst the warm welcome of the crowd, referred to the history of the city saying: "Our people across the country is well familiar with Firooz Kooh.

"When Mongols invaded Iran, Firooz Kooh was a hard target for them. The invulnerability of the region is because of these castles, high mountains, and most important of all, because of the courage and resistance of the people. This resistance reappeared during the eight-year imposed war.

During the war, Firooz Kooh despatched Brigade 22 Be'sat to the warfronts. The brigade had been mobilized by the people. They gave many martyrs, war handicapped, and POWs. This shows massive participation of the people in the affairs of their country in Firooz Kooh.

Due to the distance of the city from Tehran, immigration rate is very low in the city. That is why they have been faithful to their own culture, but like all of the Iranians they are religious and obedient to *Velayat-e Faqih*.

One of the reasons why Firooz Kooh was recognized as a city in Iranian administrative divisions, was because of the president's visit to the city who said: "Recognizing Firooz Kooh as a city burdens no expense on the nation and government."

There is a very high solidarity among the offices in Firooz Kooh. Also there are almost 120 clergymen in the city who have formed Jame'ye Ruhaneyyat-e Mobarez (JRB) in the region. A few of them are busy offering religious services in the villages. A few others are either busy in other cities or in Qom Theological School.

President Hashemi Rafsanjani and Engineer [illegible] Iran [illegible]

Also the Friday prayer leader is from Firooz Kooh. As it was mentioned earlier there is a high solidarity between the religious leaders and the public in the region.

The head of Governor's Office hopes that under the said solidarity, the city will find its real status in Tehran Province.

Under the Islamic Republic government, infrastructure activities have been launched in the villages of the city. During the last three or four years, the activities have been accelerated.

"We are proud to announce that there is no village in the city without electricity, and most of the main and intervillage roads have been asphalted," the head of Governor's Office said.

The problems of potable water, communications and telecommunications have been removed from the villages. Some of the villages enjoy 256-line telecommunication centers. All of these activities have been accomplished by the attentions of the Islamic government.

Of course, the infrastructure works have not been started inside the city yet. This year, however, due to the new administrative division, credits have been allocated for Firooz Kooh. Rls. 5,300,000,000 of provincial credits, 700,000,000 rials from underprivileged regions credits, and 1,300,000,000 rials credits allocated during the president's visit to the city are glimpses of hope for this ancient city.

The ontime allocation of credits will change the face of the region completely, especially the city of Firooz Kooh.

Since, travelers destined to Tehran will have to pass through Firooz Kooh, the city should have beautiful streets, parks, squares, recreational centers and the like to attract the travelers.

As far as the industrial sector is concerned, there is an industrial sector in the region affiliated to the Ministry of Industry. Almost 90 workshops have received the legal permission and almost 30 others are busy working in the industrial sector.

During his visit to the industrial region, the president necessitated the revival of the inactive units and creation of new ones to industrially revolutionize the whole region.

Likewise, there are two rural industrial regions affiliated to the Construction Jihad Ministry: Katalan and Arjomand-e Firooz Kooh. The two regions will start work in near future by the ministry's aids to economically revolutionize the region and create job opportunities to solve the unemployed problem.

People also expect new horizons and further attentions from provincial authorities and Tehran responsible officials ever since Firooz Kooh has been named a city.

Granting sufficient budget is all Firooz Koohi people want.

As the president announced before the people in the city, Firooz Kooh, due to its cold weather, is in dire need of gas supply.

President Hashemi Rafsanjani said "we will supply gas for Firooz Kooh by the year 1377 (1998). The preliminary steps will be taken this year (1996). It is expected that Ministry of Oil, start gas project of the city."

Due to the follow-ups and allocation of a piece of land for a 96-bed hospital to Ministry of Health, the physicians building was built.

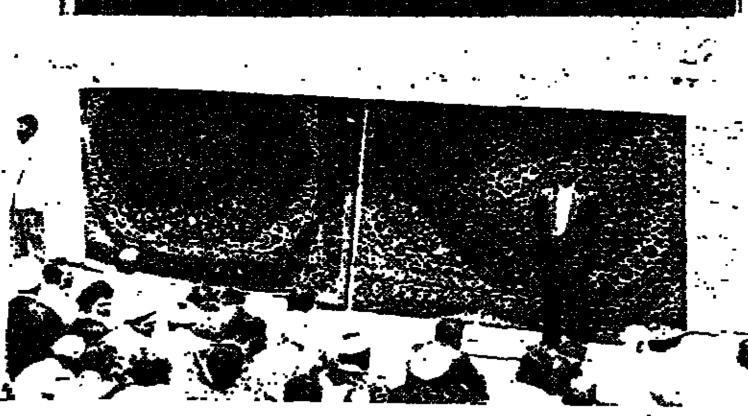
Regarding the fact that Firooz Kooh is at the crossroad of three provinces (Mazandaran, Semnan, and Tehran), during the rush days of Norouz holidays and because the other two roads (Chaloos and Haraz) were blocked for construction works, many accidents took place in the roads leading to the city. The number of injuries were many and there was no equipped hospital in the city to save the lives of the injured. Upon an order by the president an equipped hospital is supposed to be built in the city.

Construction of Namrud Dam is another urgent need in the region, for implementation of which the president gave word in his visit. Early this year 1,500,000,000 rials was allocated for the carrying out the feasibility studies on the project. Officials of the city request Ministry of Energy to start the dam construction operations soon.

It should be mentioned that the feasibility studies of the dam were launched before the Islamic Revolution. The dam, if fully implemented, will be the largest dam in the country after Karaj Dam. Materialization of this important project will change the face of the region and besides weather conditions, it will create job opportunities in there.

Firooz Kooh is one of the agricultural pillars of the country. In this sector also much activities can be done.

Creation of dam also will water the lands of Garmsar and Varamin, thus revolutionize the agriculture of these two regions. People in the region await construction works of Namrud Dam as soon as possible.

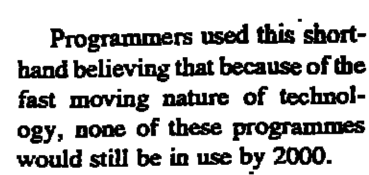

President Hashemi addresses people of Firooz Kooh

Smaller UK Companies Face Millennium Bug Sting

LONDON — Most small and medium sized British companies are still unaware that the millennium computer bug threatens their survival, experts said Monday.

And although most bigger British companies are aware of the bug, more than 90 percent have yet to complete an internal audit of their information technology systems, the experts told a news conference.

The millennium bug is a potential glitch in the software which runs computers. This threatens to crash systems at midnight on December 31, 1999, or cause them to spew out erroneous data.



The problem springs from short-cuts taken by computer programmers in the 1970s and 1980s. To save previous memory then in short-supply, programmers abbreviated years to a two-digit shorthand — "87" or "98" for instance.

When the calendar clicks over to the year 2000, some computers will read the date as "00" and will either shut-down or churn out misleading information.

Programmers used this short-hand believing that because of the fast moving nature of technology, none of these programmes would still be in use by 2000.

This error of judgement could potentially cut a swathe of destruction across economies because of the ubiquity of computers in the modern world.

Companies may go bankrupt, health services could be crippled, pension and social security payments might go awry, power stations and telephone systems may stutter or fail.

"Our last survey at the end of last year showed that two thirds of managers of big corporations were aware of the problem, but only nine percent of organizations had completed an audit of their computer systems," said *Margaret Joachim*, assistant director of Taskforce 2000.

Taskforce 2000 was set up by the British government to raise awareness of the millennium bug problem.

"We think nothing much has changed since the end of the year. It still isn't good. Small and medium sized enterprises are still not aware that it (the millennium bug) affects them," Joachim said.

Tony Lewis, executive director of the computer software services association, said because many large companies use thousands of small companies as suppliers, they would face disruption to their businesses even if their own computer systems were bug-free.

Lewis cited food store chain J. Sainsbury Plc. "Look at Sainsbury. It's got about 7,000 suppliers. They all have to be compliant," Lewis said.

Other experts at the news conference said that although Britain's situation was worrying, industry had made more progress than other European countries such as Germany and France.

Scarce programming capacity in Germany and France was concentrating on preparing business for Monetary Union, scheduled to start on January 1, 1999.

Only the United States had made more progress than Britain in stamping out potential damage from the millennium bug.

(Reuter)

Apple Computer Seeks to Woo Software Developers

WASHINGTON — A worldwide meeting of software developers that opens Tuesday in San Jose, California, could be the turning point for troubled Apple computer.

Before hundreds of software programmers, Apple will unveil not one but two operating systems that its creators expect will spark the company's renaissance, said Guerrino de Luca, Apple's marketing director.

"From now to summer will be a critical time," he told AFP. "A lot will depend on how they (the developers) will react."

The stakes are indeed high for Apple, which has lost 1.64 billion dollars in the last 18 months and is in the middle of a major corporate restructuring.

On Tuesday, Gil Amelio, Apple's chief executive, will unveil a preliminary version of rhapsody, the operating system of the next generation of Apple products, as well as the latest version of Mac Os, the operating system in Macintosh personal computers.

The company will follow this twin strategy in the same way that its powerful rival, Microsoft, is moving on two fronts, de Luca said.

Microsoft controls 85 percent of the personal computer market with its Windows operating system, but has produced a more solid and powerful platform — Windows NT — to conquer business computer networks.

After years of trying to transform Mac Os into a modern system, Apple has decided to end its effort.

At the end of December, the company announced it would buy, for 400 million dollars, the nextstep program from Apple co-founder and former chief executive Steve Jobs.

Based on nextstep, rhapsody represents a radical break from the Macintosh for Apple at a time when the company "cannot afford to be wrong," said Eugene Glazer, an analyst with Dean Witter Reynolds.

Apple says it expects to continue development of Mac Os even as it forges ahead with rhapsody. Mac Os 8, a version adapted to the Internet, is expected to be available in July, and "there will be a Mac Os 9 in July 1998," de Luca said.

"Our biggest challenge is to reassure our customers that we will be there," de Luca said. "We have to get back to profitability. That we'll do by driving the top line."

(AFP)



KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, Florida, United States (May, 11): The crew of the space shuttle Atlantis (from L-R:) Carlos Noriega of the U.S. pilot Eileen Collins of the U.S. Michael Foale of the U.S. Russia's Elena Kondakova, commander Charles Precourt of the U.S., France's Jean-Francois Clervoy and Edward Lu of the U.S. pose upon arrival to Kennedy Space Center's shuttle landing facility to begin the launch countedown. The ten-day STS-84 mission scheduled for liftoff May 15 will deliver a new oxygen generator to the Russian Mir station, where Foale will replace U.S. astronaut Jerry Linenger for a stay on the Mir.

(AFP PHOTO)

Space Shuttle Atlantis Set to Pick Up U.S. Astronaut

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla — The U.S. space shuttle Atlantis was set to blast off on Thursday to dock with Russia's Mir space station and pick up a U.S. astronaut who has endured more in-flight emergencies than any other since Apollo 13.

Atlantis was scheduled for a pre-dawn blastoff on Thursday and a docking the next day with the orbiting Russian space outpost, where U.S. astronaut Jerry Linenger has been living since January.

The shuttle's traditional three-day countdown was due to get underway on Sunday night.

Linenger, who has had to contend with a serious fire and a string of mechanical breakdowns aboard Mir, said he was looking forward to the shuttle's arrival.

"When the shuttle shows up and my colleagues from America are here once again, it's going to be a real nice feeling," he said in a recent television interview.

The 42-year-old U.S. navy captain and medical doctor is eager to be reunited with his infant son, John, and his wife, Kathryn, who is expecting their second child in June.

The astronaut's trouble began on Feb. 23 when an oxygen generator burst into flame, filling Mir with choking smoke and blocking the escape route to one of the station's lifeboats.

The fire was extinguished after 90 seconds, but the station's crew were forced to wear gas masks until the toxic smoke cleared. It was only the start of the station's problems.

Another oxygen generator shut down, leaving the station with a limited air supply; an unmanned cargo craft went out of control as it neared the station; and guidance problems caused the sprawling complex to tumble.

The station's cooling system then sprung leaks, causing a device used to remove carbon dioxide from the air to fail, and sending temperatures aboard the station soaring. To make matters worse, Linenger and his two Russian crewmates suffered nasal congestion and eye irritation from the leaking antifreeze vapor.

Twice the Mir crew were ready to abandon ship; once after the fire and then when they feared the out-of-control cargo craft might collide with the station.

The mission's fortunes reached a turning point in April when another unmanned cargo craft arrived at the station carrying repair gear. The station's primary oxygen generator was nursed back to life, some of the cooling system leaks were plugged, and the carbon dioxide remover was reactivated.

A sign that life aboard Mir was really returning to normal came on April 29, when Linenger and the station's Russian commander stepped outside for the first U.S.-Russian spacewalk. NASA hailed the five-hour walk as historic.

After the morale-boosting venture into open space, space agency officials approved the stay of another U.S. astronaut on Mir. Michael Foale, a veteran of three shuttle missions, is to take Linenger's place on Mir. He will ride to the station aboard Atlantis.

The British-born astrophysicist said he had no qualms about embarking on a four-month tour of duty aboard the 11-year-old space station.

"I'm not worrying about this," he said. "To be honest, I actually look forward sometimes to these situations when things don't quite go per plan. It makes life more interesting."

(Reuter)

Chronology of China's Recent Civil Air Crashes

BEIJING — The following is a chronology of civil air crashes in China in recent years:

July 1992 — Soviet-built Yak-42 owned by China General Aviation Corp. crashes on take-off from airport in eastern city of Nanjing, killing 106 of 116 people on board.

August 1992 — M1-8 helicopter owned by China General Aviation Corp. and operated by Beijing united aviation tourism crashes near Great Wall on outskirts of Beijing, killing 15 people, including nine Japanese tourists.

October 1992 — Soviet-built pistoned-engined Ilyushin Il-14m owned by Wuhan Airlines crashes in northwestern Gansu Province, killing 14 people, including five crew and nine French tourists.

November 1992 — China southern airlines Boeing 737 slams into a hill coming in to land at southern scenic city of Guilin, killing all 141 people aboard.

July 1993 — Four-engined British aerospace Bae 146 owned by China northwest airlines fails on takeoff in northern Ningxia Province, slamming into a marsh and breaking up, killing 55.

November 1993 — Northern China Airlines MD-82 crashes at Urumqi airport in northwestern Xinjiang Province, killing 12.

June 1994 — Soviet-built Tupolev owned by China northwest airlines explodes in mid-air shortly after takeoff on a domestic flight from the ancient city of Xi'an to the southern city of Guangzhou, killing 160 people in China's worst civil air disaster. Victims included four Italians, two Britons, two Americans and one Australian.

May 8, 1997 — China southern airlines Boeing 737-300 crashes while landing in southern boomtown of Shenzhen, killing at least 35 people and injuring 35 others.

(Reuter)

UN Health Body Warns Against Cyberspace Drug Sales

GENEVA — The World Health Organization's General Assembly, in a resolution passed on Monday, urged a global fight against uncontrolled and dangerous sales of drugs in the borderless world of the Internet.

The UN health agency said in a statement that it feared the booming global computer system could become a medium for the promotion and sales of unauthorized drugs that could lead to consumer misuse, abuse and public health risks.

In a resolution adopted by consensus, it called on member states to boost cooperation among law enforcers, drug companies and the business community to control on-line sales of medicine.

WHO's chief of drug safety, Martign Ten Ham, said his agency had found at least three or four firms selling prescription drugs on the Internet without detailed information.

Drugs offered online included a severe acne drug which could cause birth defects in pregnant women, toxic drugs used in cancer therapy and even morning-after pills.

"Apart from the fact that these drugs should not be available just for anyone who wants them, they're also not accompanied by proper information on their use," said Ten Ham, a medical doctor from the Netherlands.

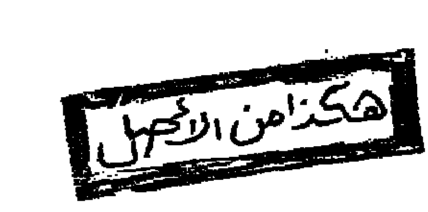
"These people selling drugs on the Internet, we never know where they are. We have no assurance on the quality of these products. I've been told there are possibilities to obtain even narcotic drugs on Internet."

He said Internet drug sales and promotion also opened the way to pill privacy — the trade of convincing but counterfeit copies of life-or-death medicines such as insulin and antibiotics.

Ten Ham said regulations on sales, prescriptions and promotion of drugs by mail and by pharmacists differed from one country to another and were impossible to enforce online.

He said it was difficult to assess the scale of the problem because it was relatively new. But he added: "it's like a fire growing fast. There's no real control. Anyone can sell drugs on the Internet. We want regulators to take up the matter."

(Reuter)



هكذا من الأصل

How to Survive an Earthquake

Tehran Times Service

The recent tremor is a warning to take safety measures seriously. People who live in quake-prone areas can and should take preventive measures to increase their chances of survival or minimize its disastrous effects on life and property.

Obviously, politicians, people and experts shoulder great responsibility in this regard. We must strive to take preventive measures to reduce the losses of life and property and minimize the casualties. The followings are some useful tips which should be accounted for:

1. Residential quarters must be built of strong materials to be quake-resistant. Remember that an earthquake is an unforeseen event which may or may not be prevented. Hence, observing this measure in areas which are predicted to be earthquake prone may reduce, if not prevent, extensive damages. In the Middle East, for example, a region of the world which is predicted to be visited by many earthquakes, municipalities in likely epicenters should take the necessary precautions particularly with regard to the approval of building permits.

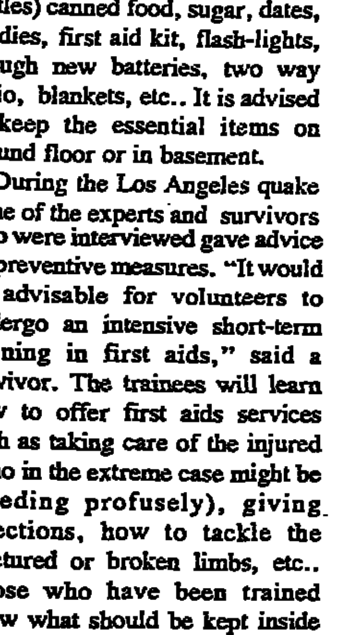
In Iran we have the National Seismologic Center (NSC) which can properly advice citizens on how to cope with natural disasters such as earthquakes. The center possesses the needed information. Mere know-how, however, is not enough, as action is urgently required. Up-to-date technology should be exchanged.

Some of the countries in Southeast Asia including Japan, Indonesia, China and Philippines are quake prone. Tremors visit Japan very often.

For the above reason Japanese government has attached great significance to tremor problem. Japanese experts were the first to invent the roller-foundation for constructions.

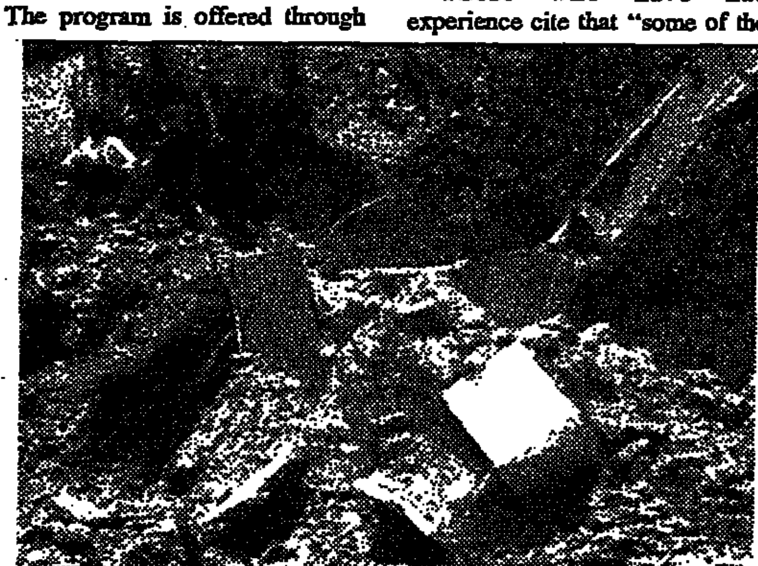
Talking about tremors many people automatically associate it with Japan. Countries, such as Japan, possess advanced information on the causes and effects of earthquakes. One of the strongest quakes which occurred in that country hit Cobe. Japanese experts have come up with the latest technical know-how on coping with tremors. Thus one of the international sources that Iran can turn to in this regard is the Japanese government. Japan has succeeded in tolerating quake magnitudes up to 6.5 on the Richter scale without sustaining losses. Japanese experts were the first to invent the roller-foundations for buildings.

The Japanese government has a special program for offering free advice to the interested nations. The program is offered through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). JICA has participated in at least three projects to cooperate with the Iranian government. One was the Yazd Electric Signaling System for cooperating with the Iranian Rail-Road Co. The second is a project for conducting a survey on the Tehran air pollution problem. The Tehran municipality's Air Quality Control Co. is currently being advised by JICA. Hence, the Iranian NSC can benefit from JICA's services in its tremor studies.



2- People who live in buildings which are not quake-resistant are advised to take precaution measures and fully prepare for disaster. Some of the items they can consider keeping accessible include oxygen masks and cylinders, water (plenty in capped bottles) canned food, sugar, dates, candies, first aid kit, flash-lights, enough new batteries, two way radio, blankets, etc.. It is advised to keep the essential items on ground floor or in basement.

During the Los Angeles quake some of the experts and survivors who were interviewed gave advice on preventive measures. "It would be advisable for volunteers to undergo an intensive short-term training in first aids," said a survivor. The trainees will learn how to offer first aids services such as taking care of the injured (who in the extreme case might be bleeding profusely), giving injections, how to tackle the fractured or broken limbs, etc.. Those who have been trained know what should be kept inside first aid kits, which include injection syringe, alcohol, cotton, bandage, tapes, appropriate pieces of timber (for holding broken limbs still) and anti-tetanus shots. Intravenous sacks, casting chalks, aspirins etc.. might also come in handy.



Those who have had experience cite that "some of the things they wished they

"I wish I had access to communication devices such as transmitters, two-way radio — or ideally a cellular-phone —, emergency breathing equipment, food, tools to pick the earth, etc." recalls another survivor who had been trapped under rubble

"You should expect the unexpected and be prepared. The better equipped you are the more your chances to survive under the rubble", said another survivor.

People should also be instructed to remove the obstacles which hamper relief efforts when tremors hit.

3- When quakes hit, the survivors should not panic. They should keep calm and if possible try to run outdoors somewhere they can escape the collapsing walls etc..

Tehran is located on a fault. Therefore, the municipality must enforce strict laws regarding designing new buildings and make sure they will be quake-resistant and will comply with quake relevant rules.

Moreover, free first aid courses should be offered in every part and district of the capital city. It is a good idea for people to be properly prepared to confront tremors and take part in relief operations.

Over 2,400 people were killed and thousands injured (according to the latest reports) when a major earthquake rocked Iran on Saturday.

An earthquake is rated major when its magnitude measures more than seven points on the Richter scale. Saturday's quake in eastern Iran registered 7.1. The waves spread to Afghanistan and some southern provinces in south and east of Iran.

The most devastating earthquake in recorded history killed 830,000 people in China's Shaanxi province in 1556.

In 1920, a quake in China's Jiangsu province killed 180,000. The worst quake in China's modern history killed 240,000 when the northeastern city of Tangshan was almost leveled by a quake measuring 7.8 in July 1976.

Following are some other major quakes in the last 10 years:

February 1997 - an earthquake killed 965 people and injured 2,600 in northwestern Iran. The quake hit the city of Ardabil and the town of Meshkinshahr in Ardabil province bordering Azerbaijan.

June 1990 - more than 35,000 people were killed and 100,000 homes destroyed by an earthquake measuring 7.3 in a region near the Caspian Sea coast.

December 1988 - more than 25,000 people killed, 18,000 injured and hundreds of thousands made homeless by a quake in Armenia.

August 1988 - about 1,000 people died in the worst earthquake to hit Nepal and northern India in half a century. In 1934, 11,000 were killed in the same area.



The recent tremors are a warning to take safety measures seriously. The Birjand tremor is the strongest Iranian quake in seven years. This is not the first time such a disaster has jolted our country, nor is its recurrence inconceivable considering the fact that Iran is prone to earthquakes. Throughout its history this country has faced tremors.

It is imperative to realize that the Alborz region, Tehran, Khorassan, Gilan and Azarbaijan provinces are prone to sever tremors. Consider Tehran. In the face of a tremor, the capital city will sustain huge loss of life and property.

The government and the nation ought to join hands to take appropriate measures to minimize the consequent losses and casualties. The municipality must focus its attempts on enforcing the building safety regulations.

Efforts should be made to consider these principles when designing cities, villages, bridges, power plants, etc.. One problem besetting Iran is heedlessness in implementing the construction projects. For instance, unlike industrialized countries, in most Iranian villages, clay or sun-dried bricks and mud are utilized in buildings that easily collapse, even by tremors measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale.

Asylum Seeker Deported From Britain Said Killed in Algeria

LONDON — The home office said Friday it was making urgent inquiries into a claim that a rejected asylum seeker was killed after being held in custody in Algeria.

The refugee council said earlier it had learned from reliable sources that the 25-year-old man, a former Algerian policeman who was deported from Britain last month, died after the Algerian authorities took him into custody on his return.

The refugee support group — which declined to name the man for fear his family in Algeria might be put in danger — called for an immediate freeze on deportations of rejected asylum seekers back to Algeria.

"It is a matter of great shame for this country that someone should be killed in Algeria because we failed to offer sanctuary against persecution," said council chief executive Nick Hardwick.

A home office spokeswoman said they were aware of the allegation and were making urgent efforts to try to ascertain whether it was correct.

"The situation is being looked at by ministers this weekend," she said. (AFP)

UN Envoy Meets Burma's Intelligence Chief

RANGOON, Burma — One of Burma's top generals consented to meet with a special envoy of the UN secretary general just hours before the diplomat's four-day peace mission to Burma ended on Saturday.

Assistant UN secretary general Alvaro De Soto met with Gen. Khin Nyunt, Burma's intelligence chief and a leading member of the state Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the group of 21 generals that rules Burma, the government news agency reported.

The meeting took place at the Ministry of Defense, but the agency gave no information about the length of the conference or what was discussed.

The envoy arrived last week in Rangoon with the intention of promoting a dialogue between SLORC and pro-democracy forces led by 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi.

De Soto met with Suu Kyi on Friday, but despite meeting with Burma's foreign minister, no member of SLORC had any contact with the UN envoy. (AP)

UN Wants Togo to Pursue Mediation in Bakassi Peninsula Row

LOME, Togo — The United Nations recently asked President Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo to continue mediation efforts in a long-running row between Nigeria and Cameroon over the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula, the presidency here announced.

"President Eyadema has involved himself with great dynamism, efficacity and above all dedication to resolve this problem," UN assistant secretary general Ibrahim Fall told journalists.

"That is why the United Nations wants these efforts to resume and to lead to a rapid solution which will keep the peace and maintain good relations and cooperation between the two countries," he added.

Eyadema has brought Nigeria's and Cameroon's foreign ministers together several times over the last two years in attempts to resolve the border dispute, which dates back to both countries' independence.

Late last year, the UN sent a mediation team to both Nigeria and Cameroon to set up a summit, which would have been held under the aegis of Togo's head of state. (AFP)


هكذا من الانجيل